

I. Introduction

Steinbeck, Marxism and the Great Depression

John Ernst Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California on February 27, 1902 of German and Irish ancestry. His father was county treasurer and his mother was school teacher who fostered Steinbeck's love of reading and the written word. During the summers, he worked as a hired hand on nearby ranches, nourishing his impression of the California country side and its people.

After graduating from Salinas's high school in 1919, he attended Stanford University. Originally an English major, he pursued a program of independent study and his attendance was sporadic. During this time he worked periodically at various jobs and left Stanford permanently in 1925 to pursue his writing career in New York. However, he was unsuccessful in getting any of his writing published and finally returned to California.

His first novel *Cup of Gold* was published in 1929 but attracted little attention. His two subsequent novels, *The Pastures of Heaven* and *To a God Unknown* were also poorly received by the literary world. He married his first wife Carol Henning in 1930. They lived in Pacific Grove where much of the material for *Tortilla Flat* and *Cannery Row* was gathered. *Tortilla Flat* (1935) marked the turning point in Steinbeck's literary career. It received the California common wealth clubs gold medal for best novel by a California author. He continued writing, relying upon extensive research and his personal observation.

Steinbeck is probably best remembered for his strong sociological novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, considered one of the great American novels of the 20th century. This *Tortilla Flat* was an affectionate yet realistic novel about the lovable, exotic, spins speaking poor of Monterrey. The novel *In Dubious Battle* (1936) defends striking migrant agricultural workers in the California fields. In the novella *Of Mice and Men* (1937) he again presents migrant workers but in terms of human worth and

integrity a theme he also used in *The Moon is Down* (1942) about Norwegian resistance to the Nazis. His *The Grapes of Wrath* won the Pulitzer prize. *The Grapes of Wrath*, while treating the plight of dispossessed dust bowl farmers during the 1930s, presents a universal picture of victims of disaster. His depiction of the westward migration of the Joad family, and their subsequent struggles in the exploitative agricultural industry of California, is realistic and moving, and he endows his humble characters with nobility.

His other works are *The Sea of Cortez* (1941), *The Pearl* (1948), *The Short Reign of Pippin IV* (1957), *The Long Valley* (1938), *The Wayward Bus* (1947), *Sweet Thursday* (1954), *East of Eden* (1952), *Winter of Our Discontent*.

Steinbeck was awarded the 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature. His novels can be classified as social novels dealing with the economic problems of rural labour, but there is also a streak of the soil in his books, which does not always agree with his matter of fact sociological approach.

Steinbeck's literary background brought him into close collaboration with leftist authors, journalists, and labor union figures, which may have influenced his writing. He was mentored by radical writers Lincoln Stiffens and his wife Ella Winter and through Francis Whitaker, a member of the United States Communist Party's John Reed Club for writers, Steinbeck met with strike organizers from the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial union.

Steinbeck writes basically about the proletariat people. His ideas are definitely sympathetic to the left politics. He made link with the contemporary radical writers like Lincoln Stiffens, with members of United States Communist Party's John Reed club for writers like Francis Whitaker and he also met with strike organizers from the Cannery and Agricultural Worker's Industrial Union.

Steinbeck was mentored by Lincoln Stiffens (1866-1936), who covered the Mexican Revolution in 1910 and began to see Revolution as preferable to reform.

Stiffens developed a short lived enthusiasm for communism. Steinbeck met with strike organizers from the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union through Francis Whitaker. Whitaker was a member of United States Communist Party's John Reed club, a recognized student's organization concerned with the study of Marxism. John Reed Club was associated with John Steinbeck, Grace Lumpkin, Robert N. Bella and *The Partition Review*.

Grace Lumpkin (1892-1980) is best remembered as an author in the tradition of proletariat literature. Robert N. Bella was a member of The Communist Party and the chairman of John Reed Club whose political views are often classified as communitarian. *Partition Review* was an American political and literary quarterly published from 1934 to 2003, though it suspended publication between October 1936, and December 1937. Hence Steinbeck worked with his peers who were Marxists and he also raised same political views.

John Steinbeck collaborated with Labor Union (A Trade Union) which is a continuous association of wage- earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the condition of their employment. He had link with the Communist Party of the U.S.A. In Wikipedia, the situation of the time is described as:

The Communist Party of U.S.A. is a Marxist Leninist Party in United States. It played a defining role in Labor Movement of 1920s and 1940s. It defended the rights of African American throughout that period and 1960s was largely eclipsed by the New left American civil Rights movement. (1)

John Tessitore in his book *John Steinbeck: A Writers Life* says:

In his later life and work Steinbeck would prove sympathetic to the nation's minorities and advocate the expansion of civil rights. Even during his days on the speckless ranches, his sympathies lay with his

bindlestiff co-workers, not with men like his father who controlled the government and economy. (47)

From this comments too, it becomes clear that he was a Marxist writer who always supported the common workers or wage-earners. Tessitore later writes "For years Steinbeck had been the subject of investigation by California State Officials because of his involvement with socialist and communist organizations" (120). It shows that Steinbeck struggles for the common people objecting the contemporary capitalist domination in U.S.A. He knew that capitalism is the cause for the sufferings of the farmers, industrial workers in the country.

Steinbeck directly or modestly followed the path of Marxism. His writings were based on Marxist Philosophy that's why he wrote about the proletariat. He always supported the common people, workers, wage-earners, farmers. He believed that literature is a necessity of human life; at its best, it reveals injustices and gives people hope. It is the Marxist thought. He is a strong determinant of his ideas and his works. Sometimes he became liberal but did not change his political views throughout his life. He always supported the socialist moment of U.S.A.

1930s was the time of Great Depression. Due to the result of World War I and warfare in the Europe and other countries people had become hopeless. People stopped to think about the people. Writers started to write but their writings were full of depression and despair. It seemed that the war was going to happen just a moment later. There was scarcity of the food material. Wealthy people stored foods which created market problem. Steinbeck also became the victim of it. Many writers who were involved in the First World War wrote about the worthless war and their depression.

John Tessitore in his book *Extraordinary American Writers* describes Steinbeck and the period of 1930s as:

The depression was one of the nation's greatest trials in U.S.A. For ten years following the stock market crash of 1929, the U.S. economic staggered. Millions of Americans lost their jobs and lived in poverty. The Southwestern farm regions were hit particularly hard. All these disasters of the country touched Steinbeck too. First as a worker and later as a reporter, he lived among the farmers who were too poor to own land during 1930s and who were therefore forced to migrate from region to region looking for work. He turned their experiences into fiction. (200)

So Steinbeck has written about the problems and sorrow of the people. He has depicted contemporary depression in his works. Steinbeck lived and developed his writing career in that critical time.

John Tessitore writes in *John Steinbeck A Writer's Life*, "In all his work, he explored the major issues of the day, and of any day, greed and corruption, friendship and loyalty, fear and survival, weakness and heroism and he found his way into the heart of past and future readers"(11).

On the one hand he was writing in the time of Great Depression and on the other hand he had to lose his mother in 1934. The time was very critical for him. The current socio-political state of the nation directly affected his writing. It was very hard for him to remain far from these aspects. He also worked in factory where the temperature frequently climbed over the hundred degrees. He himself lived the life of workers, farmers and proletariat groups. So he wrote about them, he exposed the depression of the time in his writing. He depicted the current socio-economic scenario. All of his works called attention to the plight of migrant farmers. He wrote about a farm labour strike in *In Dubious Battle* (1936). His best known work is the Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) which follows the travels of a poor Oklahoma family that loses its farm during the depression and travels to

California to seek work. Family members suffer conditions of feudal oppression by rich landowners. In *Outline of American Literature* Steinbeck is described as:

Steinbeck combines realism with a primitist romanticism that finds virtue in poor farmers who live close to the land. His fiction demonstrates the vulnerability of such people. Who can be uprooted by droughts and are the first to suffer in periods of political unrest and economic depression. (74)

So his writings were the result of depression and poverty. His novel *The Pearl* also reflects the contemporary capitalistic domination in the U.S.A. Therefore we can say that his knowledge, experience and contemporary situation were equally important in his writing.

Critical Review of Steinbeck's *the Pearl*

Steinbeck was one of the best-known American novelists of the mid-20th century. His frequent topic was the plight of misfits, the homeless and the hopeless in a fast changing America. He was famous for his style of writing too. Scholastic Scope writes, "Author John Steinbeck used more than a pen and paper to write. He had secret, stronger tool: descriptive language. Because of Steinbeck's powerful choice of words, his characters and settings seem to spring off the page and come to life"(3). It shows that he was not only famous for theme but also for style.

Brown, Richard et. al. finds autobiographical elements in his writing, "Steinbeck emerged with a profound understanding of manual works or labours that manifest itself in many of his books" (967). Steinbeck brought materials for writing from his own life experience that he had spent long time working as a labour. *Outline of American Literature* finds similar features in his writings: "Steinbeck's fiction demonstrates the vulnerability of such people who can be uprooted by droughts and are the first to suffer in periods of unrest and economic depression" (74). It tells that he presents the age in his writing. He draws the contemporary vulnerable picture of

American society which was badly affected by the Great Depression. *Contemporary Authors Online* comments on Steinbeck:

Throughout his long and controversial career John Steinbeck extolled the virtues of the American dream while he warned against what he believed to be the evils of an increasingly materialistic American society. Although his subject and style varied with each book, the themes of human dignity and compassion, and the sense of what a time critic called Steinbeck's vision of America remained constant. (1)

It tries to tell that his theme of writing is humanity. He writes for the people and welfare of humanity.

Similarly *Journal of American Folktales* comments, "like so many of his counterparts, Steinbeck links the advent of capitalist modernity to the demise of local vernacular culture" (4). In this way many writers and journals have given the criticism on Steinbeck.

Steinbeck took a political, philosophical stand on his career. He stayed close with Marxist philosophy. He wrote about the similar people and their surroundings. He did not write stories, novels and other fiction for reading but turned to other areas too. John Tessitore writes *In Extraordinary American* writers, "Steinbeck also pursued his interests in writing for the stages and films. He adapted several of his works for the theater and wrote other especially for performance" (210). In writing he was in favour of common people. He took literature as a part of human life. Tessitore states it in *John Steinbeck, A Writers Life* as, "Steinbeck believed that literature is a necessity of human life, at its best, it reveals injustices and gives people hope, and he struggles to accomplish these things in his on work"(10).

Contemporary Authors Online comments, "*The Grapes of Wrath* is perhaps the best example of Steinbeck's philosophy, perception and impact. It is Steinbeck's" "strongest and most durable novel" (1). *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) is a story of the

Joads, impoverished farmers who migrate to California after losing their Oklahoma land. Most reviewers tended to see it as a work of protest rather than art. It is Steinbeck's gift to literary history. Tessitore writes in *John Steinbeck A Writers Life*, "*The Grapes of Wrath* came to symbolize the effects of poverty more generally and the efforts of common people to maintain their dignity despite of intense suffering"(129).

Steinbeck turned poor farmer's experience into fiction. He wrote about a farm labour strike in *In Dubious Battle* (1936). His *Tortilla Flat* introduced readers to the men and women. Steinbeck would depict more seriously in his greatest writing, the poor farmers who settled in California during the Great Depression. *Of Mice and Men* recounts an episode in the lives of two bindlestiffs, George and Lennie, who roam the California countryside looking for work. It was great but some critics dismissed the novel as an insignificant fairy tale or criticized Steinbeck for his interest in violence.

In East of Eden, Steinbeck wove together three separate narratives: the history of the Salinas valley, the history of the Hamilton family and the fictional story of Adam Trask, his wife Cathy and sons Caleb and Aeron. It was also of the seller. When *The Winter of our Discontent* appeared in June 1961, some critics, such as Saul Bellow, praised the novel as Steinbeck's best work in years.

Steinbeck's *The Pearl* (1947) is about struggle between the wealthy and poor, between the strong and weak and between different cultures and tribes. Oppression and domination are visible in the novel. The protagonist's violence is caused by this oppression. Different critics have seen this novel from different angles. David Wyatt comments on the book:

The Pearl is a symbolic tale of a Mexican Indian pearl diver, Kino, who finds valuable pearl that changes his life but not in a way he expected. Kino sees the pearl as a opportunity for better life. He is soon surrounded by greedy priest, doctor, business man and finally

throws the pearl back in to the ocean. So it is a story of corruption by material wealth and possessions. (32)

Here Wyatt tries to prove that the tragedy of Kino is the cause of capitalist society which always tries to dominate and suppress the common people.

According to Alexander Saxton, the main theme of the novel is "struggle for survival" (24). Here Alexander looks this novel from existentialist point of view. Lindon Taggart comments on the book, "*The Pearl* depicts the themes of greed and lost dreams. Through gradual stages of change, Kino realizes that money is not always the most important thing in life" (5). In this way different critics see this novel from different angles. John Tessitore, *In Extraordinary American Writers*, says, "In *The Pearl* Steinbeck explored the consequences of jealousy and greed in human relationships"(200). It clarifies that Steinbeck explores the crisis of humanity in the contemporary world. Antlion comments on *The Pearl*:

This novel by American writer John Steinbeck is actually retelling of a Mexican folktale, the story of a poor fisherman and his wife and a baby when the fisherman, Kino finds an extraordinary pearl. He hopes it will bring comfort and health to his family, but discovers that the rare gem is instead a conveyor of greed, envy and ultimately death. (2)

After reading the criticism on *The Pearl* I'm going to explore the issue that the novel raises voice against the social oppression.

Somewhere in the world there is defeat for everyone. Some are destroyed by defeat, and some are made small and mean by victory. Greatness lives in one who triumphs equally over defeat and victory and that greatness lies in Steinbeck. He did not leave his stance and stayed in the country even in the time of Great Depression whereas many of his fellow writers left. Those years were the years of hopelessness and chaos. Throughout the time people were in disillusionment but he did not change his destiny and place. He lived with his co-workers, farmers in California, where he

collected materials for his writing. So he was great determinant and different from other writers of same age. John Tessitore stresses in *John Steinbeck A writer's Life*:

In the Late Twenties, many of the American writers who came of age during world war I- the Lost Generation that included Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald- settled in Paris. Their break through year was 1925: Hemingway published *In Our Time*; Fitzgerald released *The Great Gatsby*. But John Steinbeck would always follow a different path from his peers and during the summer of 1925 he lived as far from Paris as he possibly could. (25)

Steinbeck followed the different path from his peers who were called the lost generation. He had strong determinacy than other writers of his time.

Prentice Hall's *The American Experience* talks about the postwar (World War I) period. "The Postwar disenchantment led a number of American writers to become expatriates or exiles. Many of these writers settled in Paris, where they were influenced by Gertrude Stein"(645). Hemingway and Fitzgerald are the best known of the expatriates or exiles". After the war Hemingway had a difficult time readjusting to life in United States. Hoping to find personal contentment and establish himself as a writer, he went to Paris. In *The Sun Also Rises* he writes about the expatriates searching for sensation that would enable them to forget the pain and disillusionment they associate with life in the modern world.

Similarly Fitzgerald also went to Paris and became friend of Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, Hemingway and other expatriates and writers. Ezra Pound spent most of his adult life in England, France and Italy. J.S. Eliot, born in St. Louis, went to Europe in 1914 and did not return to the United States until 1927. The Great Depression touched him too but he did not go for exile by being frustrated, though, His works depict the depression, Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) vividly

describes the farmers who left the Midwest for California in search of jobs during the Great Depression.

A new literary age was also dawning in northern Manhattan, in Harlem. Black writers, mostly new comers from the South, were creating their own renaissance there which is called Harlem Renaissance. New approaches in literary writing began between the World Wars. The stream of consciousness technique became one of the best techniques for writing literary text. James Joyce, John Dos Passos William Faulkner and T.S. Eliot used this technique for their writing. William Carlos William begins new approaches in writing poetry and called his poetry 'objectivist', whereas Steinbeck had own literary style as *Outline of American Literature* suggests "Steinbeck combines realism with primitivist romanticism that finds virtue in poor farmers who live close to the land. His fiction demonstrates the vulnerability of such people, who can be uprooted by droughts and are the first to suffer in period's o political unrest and economic depression" (74).

Reflecting the influence of the Naturalists, John Steinbeck generally portrayed working-class characters who were manipulated by forces beyond their understanding or control. Yet although many of his characters suffered tragic fates, they almost always managed to retain a sense of dignity throughout their struggles. Steinbeck also got Nobel Prize for literature in 1962 and he had lived in the time of writers like Hemingway, William Faulkner, T.S. Eliot, Pear S. Buck, Eugene O 'Neill, Sinclair Lewis who were also the Nobel Prize winner.

When we see Steinbeck and the then literary scenario, he has his own unique identity among the Contemporary Literary generation. Although he was a writer in the critical time of United States, he took his stand and continued his career on it. He spent his most of time with working class people and his almost all writings belong to the same class. He had unique characteristics that made him a national celebrity but he did not like to be the man of media. Not only in the United States, but also in the

international arena he is equally existed. He struggled hard at his time, became successful writer and great writer of the age.

III. Theoretical Modality: Marxism

Marxism

Marxism refers to the philosophy and social theory based on Karl Marx on the one hand, and to the political practice based on Marxist theory on the other hand.

Marxism is a tradition of critical thought and political action derived from the social and economic theories and revolutionary politics of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels.

From the late 19th century to the present, diverse interpretation and applications of Marxian theory have arisen.

Marxism is a philosophy of history which is seen as a dialectical process of progressive change arising from conflict; a philosophy of human nature, seeing people as defined by their relations within society and fulfilled by controlling the fruits of their labour. Marxist principles have thus been applied in variety of fields like cultural materialism, feminism etc. Marxism believes that social being determines consciousness. It means that it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. Chris Rohmann stresses:

Marxism tends to certain assumptions; these include the proposition that capitalism is based on the exploitation of wage labor, which alienates people from their true capacities and from each other; that social, political, and cultural systems are shaped by exploitative economic relations, which create and perpetuate mutually hostile CLASS divisions; and that class conflict and the system's own contradiction will lead to overthrow and replacement by a more equal and just socialist society. (205)

Marx has said that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” (24). Marxist criticism is related to sociological theories of literature in that it treats literature within a larger framework of social reality. To explain the relation

of literature with social reality, Marx has used on architectural metaphor of base and superstructure. It means the socio-economic elements in any social relation are created by the kind of economic productions in the society.

Marxist literary criticism approaches text in terms of their ideological assumptions and historical contexts and generally holds that a work of art always serves a social purpose, implicitly or explicitly supporting or condemning prevailing condition. The concept of ideology is crucial in Marxist literary theories. It generally means a collective representation of ideas and experience. The conflict of social classes establishes the ground upon which ideological conflicts arise. Marx reverses the traditional formulation and argues that all ideological systems are the products of real social and economic existence. It is the material interests of the dominant social class that determine how people see human existence.

For Marxists, social reality is distinct background out of which literature arises or into which it blends and has a definite shape. This shape is nothing but a series of struggles between antagonistic social classes and the types of economic production they are engaged in. Marxism argues that literature and the work of art should reflect the society. They should not be mere analysis but whole representation of social reality. Marxism sees the social reality through the eyes of proletariat. It focuses on matter which forms the consciousness of human being. According to it, the production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of man, the language of real life.

Marxism has been diverged and changed in course of time (from 19th century to present) but the basic concept of it has not been changed. It has given the ideas to change the world where the world does not refer only political. Marxism is a philosophical term that talks about the class-struggles and takes its stance on lower classes. It argues that Art, an expression of consciousness, thus is also determined by

social being and is usually characterized by struggle in which the differences and conflicts within a society are fought out.

Marxism sees the exploitation of society. It wants to dissolve the hierarchy and make a new society where there won't be any division. It tries to bring the marginalized into the mainstream of nation. And to bring them into centre, it evokes revolution where people are united and they fight together against the oppressors, which later becomes able to abolish the conflict and class and brings the freedom and prosperity to the people.

So Marxism takes class conflict as a national phenomenon. That means it occurs everywhere and it always remains in any society and from this social reality people form their consciousness and join in fight against the inequality between the people. According to it, society is constructed between two structures: base and super. Where the superior class always rules the base but the economy depends upon the base. So, Marxism offers revolution as inevitable for demolition of the hierarchy. It proposes equalitarian society where there is no division among people either of race or gender or economic class.

As Marxism proposes, Steinbeck has presented the social reality in the novel *'The Pearl'*. There we can see two classes between the race and economic class. Kino, the protagonist tries to dissolve that hierarchy. As Marxism defines, his revolution and even violent action are inevitable for the society. That's why, all the actions of Kino can be taken as voices against the social oppression.

Karl Marx and Social Conflict

Karl Marx (1818-1883) was born in Trier, Germany to Jewish parents who converted to Lutheranism. He was an immensely great philosopher from Germany, a political economist and a socialist revolutionary. He was a scholarly man who studied literature and philosophy and earned a doctorate in philosophy at the University of

Jena. Soon after beginning his journalistic career, Marx came into conflict with Prussian authorities because of his radical social views. And after a period in exile in Paris he was forced to live in Brussels. After several more forced moves, Marx found his way to London, where he finally settled in absolute poverty.

Marx was co-founder of Marxism (with Engels). He is best-known for his theories of socialism, best Expressed in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)-which, like much of his important works, was written with Engels'. Vladimir Lenin was a disciple whose triumph in the Russian Revolution of 1917 catapulted Marx to the forefront of world thought. Since 1917, Marx's thinking has been scrupulously analyzed, debated, and argued.

Marx was a great thinker, philosopher, economist and social theorist. He had great influence on Literature. He considers literature as a sociological phenomenon. Hazard Adams comments, "Not only did Marx have a very broad doctrinal influence on critics and writers, he also helped to form a movement that considers literature a sociological phenomenon to be treated similarly to other such phenomena. Literature thus becomes analyzable as a symptom of social situation"(624). While Marx called literature a sociological phenomenon, he brought social conflict in it. He sees the conflicts in society and argues that literature should show or present the conflicts.

Marx analyzes history in terms of class struggles. In his essay *The Communist Manifesto* Marx writes, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (21). Class struggle is class conflict looked at from any kind of socialist perspective. Marx's notion of class has nothing to do with hereditary caste, nor is it exactly social class in the sociological sense of upper, middle and lower classes. Instead, in the age of capitalism, Marx describes an economic class membership of a class is defined by the relationship to the means of production, i.e. position in the social structure that characterizes capitalism. Marx talks mainly about two classes that include the vast majority of population, the proletariat and the

bourgeoisie. He points out that the members of each of the two classes have interests in common. These class or collective interests are in conflict with those of the other class, as a whole. This in turn leads to conflict between individual members of different class.

In his book, *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx says that two groups of people; oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to each other in the society. From the beginning of the history, these forms exist. For him, social reality is a distinct background out of which Literature arises or into which it blends and has a definite shape and this shape is nothing but a series of struggles between antagonistic social classes and the types of economic production they are engaged in.

Marx reverses the traditional formulation and argues that all ideological systems are the products of real social and economic existence. It is the material interests of the dominant social class that determine how people see human existence, individual and collective. For instance, literature, legal system or religion of a particular period of history reflects the dominant class interests at that time. Marx's thought is basically centered on the concept of an ongoing class struggle between those who owned property the bourgeoisie-and those who owned nothing but whose work produced wealth-the proletariat. So he found the hierarchy in the society where the proletariat stands on its base and are always dominated and suppressed. When the proletariat tries to raise their voices against domination and hierarchy then the conflict occurs which is the social reality.

In *The German Ideology* (1845-46) and *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), both written in collaboration with Friedrich Engels, Marx developed his scientific theory of historical materialism. This theory held that social, political and cultural institutions, prevailing ideologies and people's very consciousness are shaped by economic relations and material conditions-in Marxian terms the social "superstructure" is supported by an economic "base". Marx and Engels identified a

series of historical stages corresponding to progressive developments in material production beginning with primitive communism and advancing through slavery and feudalism to capitalism, which was destined to be supplanted by socialism and finally by advanced communism. Each stage has been marked by an antagonistic division between the ruling class, which controls the mode of production, and the working class, which is exploited by it. Inevitably, this friction creates problems or contradictions the prevailing system cannot solve, the system becomes destabilized and is ultimately overthrown by the exploited class, who become the new masters of society. Thus the capitalist bourgeoisie, who had superseded the feudal nobility with the rise of industrialism, would in turn be ousted by the urban proletariat.

Chris Rohmann writes, "In his major work, *Capital*, Marx analyzed the mechanisms by which the working class deprived of full humanity where previous social reformers had attributed social inequality to the unequal distribution of wealth" (249). Here the social conflict is the cause of inequality to the distribution of wealth. Rohmann further stresses, "Marx also contradicted classical economic theorists who had seen wage labor as a reciprocal arrangement benefiting both employer and employee. Marx noted that this view failed to take into account the employer's ownership of the means of production" (249).

Marx brought radical breakthrough in the development of philosophy by saying that, the philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, and the point is to change it. In this way he develops a new thought.

As we see the literary career of Karl Marx, we can find the "Marx's early influences included the French socialist Claude-Henri Saint-Simon and the radical Young Hegelians especially Ludwig Feuerbach, who stressed the social Materialist nature of humanity over Hegel's Spiritual idealism Marx's version of Hegel's Dialectical theory located the cause of Human ALIENATION in exploitative economic relations and the key to its solution. Here Marx explains the exploitation of

the contemporary society which results into alienation and he refers class conflict as its symptom and solution too it means that class conflict brings the social conflict which turns into the conflict of the world and create a peace and egalitarian society.

Marx's theory is basically in favour of workers, labourers or lower classes people and as a whole in favour of humanity. He opposes the exploitation, suppression, domination on well as division in the society. Chris Rohmann writes:

While accepting the labor theory of values propounded by Adam Smith and David Ricardo, which states that the value of a commodity is determined solely by the amount of labour put into it, Marx turns it into an indictment of capitalism. Under the capitalist system, he argued, workers are paid less than the value their labor adds to the manufactured products, giving rise to surplus value in the form of profit the capitalist can reinvest this surplus, producing even more profit, while the laborer's wages must be spent on the necessity of material existence. (249)

Marx analyses the suppression of labor in the capitalist world. Marx depicts the problems of labor and he also provides the solution it. Marx says:

Trapped in this exploitative relationship, with no stake in the fruits of their labor, workers become alienated, not only from their work but from their true, creative potential. The capitalist system therefore by its nature, breeds conflict between working and owning class. This conflict will inevitably spark a revolution leading to socialism, under a dictatorship of the proletariat and ultimately to communism, a classless society in which the state will wither away. (249)

George Lukacs and Social Reality

Georg Lukacs (1885-1971) is a Hungarian political philosopher and literary critic. He is a Marxist theorist who had a major impact on western Marxism, notably

the Frankfurt school of critical theory. His early works *Soul and Form* (1910) and the *Theory of the Novel* (1916) were strongly influenced by Hegel and were written before he became a communist in 1918. These writings reflect the sociological influence of his teachers Georg Simmel and Marx Weber. His other works are *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), *The Historical Novel* (1955), *Political Writings* (1919-29), etc.

Throughout his career, Lukacs addressed the problem of the relation of form to content, art to politics. He was eventually to be regarded as the principal Marxist aesthetician of his time. His aesthetics was thoroughly Marxist; he viewed works of art as products of the social and economic circumstances within which they are created and as expression of their creator's ideology. Here his ideas are Marxist and what he sees in literature is social reality. He condemned the art for arts sake stance. In this way, he sees the role of art in society and develops a principle which tells that the social reality should be reflected in any work of art.

Lukacs was one of the fiercest Marxist critics of modernism and an unfaltering upholder of their realist position. Disagreeing with the experimental aesthetics of high modernism, he argued that its obscure and fragmentary literary forms were symptomatic of the alienation characteristics of life under capitalism. He was for re-energizing realist literature in the modern world because realism would not only affect the decadences of bourgeois modernist experimentation but also play a leading role in the democratic rebirth of the nations. In *The Dictionary of Important Ideas and Thinkers* Luckacs has been described as:

In his major work of political theory history and class consciousness.

Lukacs reconnected Marxism to the Hegelian dialectic and repudiated the historical Determinism of prevailing Marxist thought. He dismissed the positivist claim that the methods of natural science can be applied to social

analysis, on the grounds that the nature of human consciousness involves volition and choices. (239)

Here, Lukacs revived Marx's notions of reification, the process within capitalist society that makes people relate to commodities as if the objects were independent of the complex social processes and individuals' labour that produced them. This process turns social relations into relations with objects, or commodity fetishism, a symptom of the false consciousness that pervades bourgeois society and creates alienation, the split between existence and understanding that separates people from their essential natures. It also obscures and fragments the totality of existence, which only dialectical analysis can capture. To Lukacs, both modern society and Marxism were guilty of reification, the latter because the doctrine of dialectical materialism assumed that history is governed by objective, unchanging laws, not people. The dialectic, he argued, works through praxis – the unit of theory and practice – to 'demystify' the working class consciousness that has been dazed by capitalism.

In the long essay of 1954, "Art and Objective Truth", he argues that "the work of art reflects an objective reality but it does this not by slavish copying. Rather it succeeds by presentation of a concrete universal, and the formal integrity and objectivity of the work lies in that relation" (34). He further writes:

The goal for all great art is to provide a picture of reality in which the contradiction between appearance and reality, the particular and the general, the immediate and the conceptual, etc., is so resolved that two converge into a spontaneous integrity in the direct impression of the work of art and provide a sense of an inseparable integrity (35).

He holds that art must have a certain formal objectivity by virtue of a dialectical unity of form and content. He rejects the subjectualization of art that comes with the confusion of form with autonomous technique. He was just as skeptical of

socialist realism, insisting that proletarian artists must struggle critically with social issues, not merely act as instruments of party orthodoxy.

For Lukacs, social reality is a distinct background out of which literature arises or into which it blends. He argues that literature should not be mere copy of the social and economic circumstances but also show the conflict of social classes. In this way he rejects the contemporary principle art for art's sake as bourgeoisie ideology or as the products of capitalist society.

Georg Lukacs is one of the best critics who practises 'the reflection model'. The reflection model sees literature as reflecting a reality outside it. As a matter of fact, it was quite safe and rather conventional to treat literary works as something referring to a reality outside them. Not only for Lukacs, but, before the structuralist revolution, this thinking had a firm hold over Marxists for a long time as Marx himself maintained against Hegel that external reality is prior to ideas in the mind, and that the material world is reflected in the mind of man and translated into forms of thought.

Lukacs did not see literature as reflecting reality as a mirror does. But since literature is knowledge of reality, knowledge is not a matter of making one-to-one correspondences between things in the world outside and ideas in the head. He insists on a shape of dialectical all the parts are in movement and contradiction. To be reflected in literature, reality has to pass through the creative form giving work of a writer. Then, if the work is correctly formed the form of the work reflects the form of the external world. In regard to his use of the term 'form', Lukacs is rather traditional (in contrast with the Russian formalists notion of form as the sum total of devices used in a text).

In this way, Lukacs leaned more towards the Hegelian side of the Marxist thinking by treating literary works as reflections of an unfolding system. The crux of his idea is that a realist work must reveal the underlying pattern of contradictions in a

society or a social order. His view is Marxist basically in its insistence on the material and historical nature of the structure of society.

Lukacs focuses on the objectivity of art which seems more scientific.

According to his principle, any work of art should provide the picture of reality that means a work of art should present the social reality. Here social realist consists of the class struggles too. Different social classes are reflected in the literary text. In this way if we see *The Pearl*, we can take it as a picture of contemporary social reality. In Lukacs' view, work of art not only provides sacrificial reality but also reveals the underlying pattern of contradiction in society or social order.

For Lukacs, the correct form is one that reflects reality in the most objective way. In this ground, he finds the form of the early 19th century novels of Scott, Balzac and Tolstoy to be correct for embodying knowledge of the contradictory content of capitalist society. For instance, he examines Balzac's novel *Les Paysans* and finds a significant form in the triangular configuration of three social classes; landed aristocracy, bourgeoisie, and peasantry. The conflict between classes was the form of the then society and it got reflected in the novel in the form of characters' interrelations. The shift from Balzac and Tolstoy to Zola and Flaubert was actually the shift from realism to naturalism. Lukacs argues that when presenting naturalistic details the reflection becomes one-sided and hence a presence of unmediated totalities. In such a case there can be no true reflection of the dialectical shape of society. Lukacs' point is that to reflect the underlying pattern of contradictions in a society, the writer should maintain a certain distance. Unmediated totalities result in one-sided emphasis on minute-details. This is the case with James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Beckett and others as they emphasize on a particular aspect of life. Why Lukacs criticizes the writers is that these unmediated totalities have a political significance because when we are always exposed to only one side of the society or

social life, we are in away accustomed to that kind of perception, turning blind to other aspect of life.

Lukacs also expands Engel's views espoused in his letter in relation to Balzac's writing that reality transcends class sympathies. Indeed, Balzac was a political reactionary in his real life, but his novel *Les Paysans* reflects the structure of reality and, in this the novel goes against Balzac's ideology. While Engels does not explain why it could happen, Lukacs argues that it is the form of the novel itself that reflects the structure of social reality. Had it been for another, the same correct form would have been seen in the rest of his works also, which in fact does not happen. By doing so, Lukacs is greatly playing down the role of the author in the process of reflection.

Adams says: "Balzac is Lukac's principal example there follows a strong sense that human wholeness has been completely suppressed. Realism proceeds to reject harmony and beauty as illusions. The opposition of idealism and realism explicates the division in humanity that is the product of bourgeois society" (902). So Lukacs calls for a reawakened social humanism that would heal the breach between life and beauty and create a new harmony that would be worldly.

The concept of type or typicality is a central component in Lukacs reflection model. The type is not a statistical 'average' but the character or situation in the literary work which brings together the general movement of history and a number of unique individual traits. The concept of the type consists of the combination of individual character with particular traits and general trends of history. For example, Scotts Waverley in the novel of the same name is a romantic youth, full of literary fantasies. These are his particular traits, but they have been described within the general trends of history with opposing forces. As a result, Lukacs finds a correct form in the novel and *The Pearl* is not an exception for it according to Lukacs theory. In *The Pearl* we can find the corporation between the correct form of the dialectical shape of society. But Bhomfield's character in Joyce's *Ulysses* has been drawn in

isolation and hence no combination but divorce between the particular traits and general movement of history. Lukacs criticizes Joyce's *Ulysses* for failing to incorporate the correct form of the dialectical shape of society.

As Lukacs reflection model suggests *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck also presents the social reality or the pearl is the reflection of reality, where we can get the true picture of clash between the Mexican Indian people and the white people. There is combination between the particular traits and general movement of history in the novel. So the novel is a true picture contemporary society.

IV. Textual Analysis

Social Oppression and Voice against it.

The term social oppression refers to the cruel or unfair treatment of the people in society. It comes to the existence because of class division in society. This term can not be confined in the particular community or social group. There is social oppression in the whole world.

People are not only oppressed due to their economic condition but also due to their race, gender, culture, etc. The nature of oppression may be different among the communities, countries and continents but oppression is everywhere. Karl Marx, Raymond Williams, George Lukas and other Marxists see the division in society which creates the oppression. They talk about the different forms of oppression either in politics, arts, literature or in society which can be titled as social oppression.

The world is running its body under the power politics from its beginning and the oppression begins from it. It has been continually flowing with the development of human beings and always remaining with them and it always gets its existence in the world. In the modern world, it occurs because capitalism, competition and selfishness have covered the socialists thought. Consequently, more and more divisions are made between the people and the oppression is integrated with it. People are badly treated by the people in terms of their race as Dalits in Nepal. They are dominated, humiliated and suppressed in terms of their gender as women in the patriarchal society. They are put under the feet and taken as a valueless being in terms of their economic condition as poor people in the world. In the novel also, Mexican Indian tribe and people were suppressed, unfairly treated in terms of race and economic condition.

Social forces are responsible for the existence of social oppression. Our consciousness is formed by the matter or society. There are higher and lower classes

in society. So there is division. The former always suppresses the later. So there is struggle between these two structures. The struggle can be in different forms: sometimes only the voices and sometimes the violence, too. Whatever people do to dissolve the hierarchy or the suppression is their voice against the oppression. Voices have been raised in different parts of the world differently. In Nepal also different groups of Dalits, Janajatis have been united and started to struggle. They have been raising their voices for the equality and freedom. So the slogan of freedom and equality is the voice against the social oppression. Sometimes the suppression creates clash between the people which leads to the destruction and sometimes it helps to increase the social awareness and become the means of development.

Some agents of the society or community themselves work as oppressors. Human beings have internal desire to control other so they make the divisions of weaker and stronger and start to oppress. Social oppression is not always visible. It is sometime integrated with life and taken as a culture. For instance, some Dalits in some villages in Nepal do not go to the temple by saying that is their tradition. But in reality it is the oppression.

Language is another means of suppression. In the literary texts characters are distinguished by the language they use; and, in society too, language is built in such a way that it suppresses people. The language used for the higher group or classes is different from the language used for lower group. Even the public media has been doing it. For example, the Nepali language which is used to the king and common people is different hence the oppression has also begun with the language.

The world is not simply the world of human being but it is made up of between higher and lower class, rich and poor, high tribe and low tribe. Whatever the formers do that becomes good and the later, evil. It is the construction of society where the power plays important role. Due to it, hierarchy is formed and one group starts to dominate other. Whatever people do against it is the struggle which is the

voices of the common people and result of their consciousness. So whatever people are doing against the oppression are the voices against it.

In the novel *The Pearl*, Steinbeck has explicitly presented the social oppression. The Mexican Indian people, like Kino, were suppressed by the white people who were in higher position in the contemporary society as doctor, priest, and merchants. They are suppressed in terms of their race and economic condition. It has also presented the character Kino, who struggles against the oppression and speaks for his people. He struggles against the capitalist thinking and behavior and strongly objects the oppression. As a result, he flung his pearl into the ocean which is the symbol of capitalism.

The Pearl is a portrayal of social oppression. The society and the people in the novel are somewhere oppressor and somewhere oppressed group. The higher class rich people of the society, educated and superior group, elite class and so-called higher tribe suppressed the lower class and lower tribe in different forms. The characters and group, who tries to escape from that suppression get more trouble by the opposite group or people. So it is a visible picture of social oppression. The protagonist of the novel, Kino, who represents the Mexican – Indian tribe always tries to oppose or remain in opposition to the social oppression. He raises voices against it which becomes the voices of his family – Mexican Indian. His inner voices or thoughts are so strong that they seemed like a weapon or a sword, whatever he does (even violent acts) to oppose the discrimination or suppression can be taken as voices against the social oppression.

The images of the stone and plaster houses suppressed the brush houses in the novel stone and plaster represents the rich class whereas the brush houses are the symbol of poverty. The former always dominate the later and it was the society. The consciousness of the people that is built by this domination always accept it as a reality and do not try to escape from it as the Kino's people did. The number of the

people and voices of them do not matter. But the important thing is the area surrounded by the stone and plaster houses, which is the dominant symbol. So it is the oppression, it is the discrimination and domination. Not only the images of houses, but also the representation of the races is the good example of the social oppression. Wherever the person goes or whatever s/he does is not so important in front of their races. Even the ordinary works of the higher races are more acceptable in society than the great deeds of lower races which are clearly shown in the novel. Kino, a representative of his tribe, has a revolt against it. He struck the gate a crushing blow with his first of the doctor's house who does not treat his son Coyotito who was stung by scorpion. It is not his violence but his voice against the discrimination and domination.

When the doctor rejected to treat Coyotito, Kino went to the sea in his old canoe which was the only one thing of value he owned in the world. It was the property and source of food for him. It was the bulwark against starvation. Here, the canoe shows the condition of Kino. And as a representative of Mexican Indian, it shows the condition of them. They lie on the lower structure. So structurally they were the repressed people. Kino had to dive in the cold water to search the oysters to treat his body or to buy the doctor for his baby's treatment. The doctor did not treat Indian people, since they were moneyless people. So they were the powerless people. Hence, the agents of the capitalism easily sucked them as the doctor did. In the name of the service, they suck the blood and sweat of people. But there is no service for the indigent people in the world like Kino.

As soon as Kino had found the Pearl, the priest changed himself in front of Kino. He used a lot of polite words to him. Similarly the doctor came to his brush house to treat his baby. Literally, it seems that they were changed, but the reality is different. They had just changed their outer structure not the inner heart. They did it to seize the Pearl of Kino. Here we can see a common people who are suppressed by the

different forms of suppressor because they were not attracted by the helpless condition of Kino but by the valuable Pearl and they are integrated with capitalist thought.

While Kino found the pearl he saw himself in the pearl carrying a rifle. It was his desire. He thought a rifle could protect him and his tribe from the oppression. He took the pearl as a tool to fight against it so he said, "My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and will know writing. And my son will make numbers and these things will make us free because he will know and through him we will know" (708). This was the first time he had said so many words. It is his desire of freedom, his desire to escape from the chains and locks, his desire to live a free life and it is his desire of Mexican Indian people's freedom. He also took the Church as oppressor and the doctor, priest and shopkeeper as agents of that group.

The contemporary capitalists had managed the system in the village or in front of Kino's people in such a way that the different forces of the society had been sucking and seizing the proletariat in different forms. Sometimes they become normal and sometimes they become aggressive and even violent. Whatever they become is just to control the Kino's people. From the beginning of the novel, we can see the class-division and suppression. Kino becomes aware of it. He opposes them from the beginning to end. As the oppressor changed themselves to rule over Kino's people, Kino also changed himself to protect and resist and revolt. He uses strong words to oppose the system. He uses knife as a weapon to kill the obstacles. He struggles to go beyond suppression where the freedom lies.

In this way, he makes his vision clear. So he is a revolutionary character. When he found that anyhow they were trying to capture his pearl in anyway he flung it into the ocean or sea. It is his strong voice and opposition because he does not give chance to them to have control over the valuable pearl by which they can even

suppress the Mexican – Indian people. Here his decision is appraisable so he is praiseworthy.

Social oppression is visible in the novel *The Pearl*. Somewhere images are used to suppress the consciousness of the people. The images of the stone and plaster houses suppressed the brush houses, people are attracted by the power and all becomes victims of this process. It is clearly presented in the novel as, "The doctor never came to the cluster of brush houses, why should he, when he had more than he could do to take care of the rich people who lived in the stone and plaster houses of the town" (699). Here capitalist thought becomes dominant and Kino becomes the victim of it.

Similarly doctor does not care Coyotito because he thinks that Coyotito is from lower class, so he is not equal to human being. It is shown explicitly in the novel as, "for all of the doctor's race spoke to all of Kino's race as though they were simple animals" (700). Here we can see the class division, the hierarchy which is made in the society to dominate, control and suppress the common people.

Hence the doctor dominates Kino and his people. Being dominated by the doctor, Kino revolts against him:

For a long time Kino stood in front of the gate with Juana beside him. Slowly he put his suppliant hat on his head. Then without warning, he struck the gate a crushing blow with his fist. He looked down in wonder at his spilt knuckles and at the blood that flowed down between his fingers. (102)

Here Kino is not showing his anger only but it is his voice against the doctor's suppression.

All the higher class people always try to control and seize the lower class people or tribe. In the novel, shopkeepers, doctor, priest etc. try to control Kino and seize his Pearl. When Kino finds a valuable pearl, all of these come close to him.

They try to convince him and attempt to show a kind of help or kindness but actually they are just for the pearl.

Capitalist thought has been instilled in the people so the humanity has lost its way. People have left the service but they are just guided by money. So it directly affects the lives of the common people like Kino. In the novel Kino had to go in canoe which is very old and dangerous and dived in water to search the oyster and pearl just to cure or treat his baby. So here the doctor has no any humanity and it is not only because of the doctor but of his thought. So all over the novel we see oppression, domination and discrimination.

As the Marxism's definition, by using different means higher class people like doctor, priest, shopkeepers etc. try to seize the power i.e. pearl of Kino. They change their voices, become polite to the Kino not taking him as equal human being but just to control him. Not only them, all the people in society develop interest upon him. Kino's tribes are also united which is natural there. So it seems that when the common people become powerful, so called higher use different ways to get that and it is obvious in the novel.

In the novel, Steinbeck presents Church as a symbol of oppressor group since the priest is from the higher tribe. So the novel cannot be taken as reflection of social reality as George Lukas talks in his reflection model. In the novel, capitalist has managed the system in the village in such a way that the common people become happy by suppressing common people. They also make poor people unconscious, and unaware about the social activities which are done in the novel. For instance, Kino and their tribes are unaware about the price of the pearl. This is a laughable matter that Kino's tribe has been searching pearl and oyster from the hundred of years back but they don't know the prices. So it seems that capitalist has put cover on the social reality and make the common people more poor and poor day by day.

While Kino finds the pearl, he hopes that the pearl can be his assistant in life so that he can fight against the discrimination. He thinks the pearl is his weapon to fight or to resist which is clearly shown in the novel. It is shown as, "His lips moved hesitantly over this (the pearl) – 'A rifle', he said, "perhaps a rifle" (708). It is his inner voice against the oppression.

The exploitation of the Mexican Indian tribe is more visible while the novel progresses, "And in the four hundred years Kino's people had learned only one defense – a slight slitting of the eyes and a slight tightening of the lips and retirement. Nothing could break down this wall, and they could remain whole within the wall" (720). This shows the history where there is not any time that the Kino's people are free. They have been chained all over the years. There is strong wall of discrimination which always obstructs Kino's people to go out or to be free from that.

When all the pearl's dealers reject to pay the price of the pearl and try to prove that Kino's pearl is valueless. It is injustice to the common people which Steinbeck tries to present here. And Kino becomes conscious about it when he rejects to accept the pearl as valueless as he said, "I am cheated", Kino cried fiercely, "My pearl is not for sale here, I will go, perhaps even to the capital" (810). It is strong objection of Kino and this is not a general matter because he has broken the wall made by white people for more than four hundred years. It is not simply his crying and fierce shouting but a strung voice against the oppression. It shows that he understands the repression and comes to resist it. So he is the hero of his tribe who becomes able to rebel against the exploitation.

The pearl brings two things together in Kino's family. On the one hand, it brings frustration so it is evil for the family. On the other hand, it gives power to Kino to fight or protest. For this Kino's wife says in the novel, "Kino this pearl is evil. Let us destroy it before it destroys us. Let us crush it between two stones. Let us let us throw it back in the sea where it belongs. Kino, it is evil, it is evil" (724). In the

answer of his wife Kino says, "No, we said, I will fight this thing I will win over it.

We will have our chance". First fist pounded the sleeping mat. "No one shall take our good future from us" (724). Here we can see the dialectical process as Marx suggests.

Juana, Kino's wife tries to escape from the pearl. She takes the pearl as 'an Evil form'. She does this because the oppressor class indirectly attacks Kino's family to capture the pearl. Here we can see the exploitation of human rights. However, Kino never becomes tired and hopes to win as he said, "I'm a man and to be a man is to be half insane and half-god" (726). Here we can see Kino as determinant character.

While Kino's family is attacked by other people at night, he struggles with that. In the fight he kills a man and he lose his pearl too. But later, Juana finds the pearl and gives it to Kino. As Marx says, class-struggle and class conflict as natural phenomena, killing here is not unnatural. It means killing is inevitable for Kino. Otherwise he had to be killed. So it is natural and it is his strong voice not violent which can spread to the society and all people becomes ready to fight against oppression. So the unity can be formed and it can call revolution to demolish the hierarchy. So it is voice not violent.

All the brush houses leaked light and air it shows the picture of poverty among the Kino's tribe. Here all the Mexican – Indian people have brush houses and they all are poor. So the novel reflects social reality as Lukas says in his theory that literature should reflect the social reality.

Kino takes pearl as his soul and as his life. Steinbeck writes in the novel "This pearl has become my soul", said Kino, "If I give it up I shall lose my soul" (730). He doesn't only take pearl as his soul but also become ready to kill horsemen who were become ready to kill horsemen who were coming to seize his pearl". Here we can see the dialectical materialism process, on the one hand, horsemen want to seize Kino's pearl and on the other hand Kino want to kill the horsemen and seize the rifle. Kino

dreams to have a rifle and Kino wants this to fight against the oppression because he had to leave house and go in jungle to save his life since he has no rifle.

The American experience focus this elements and says that “the theme of novel is struggle for survive” (794). I accept it also but it is not only Kino’s struggle for survive. It is his strong consciousness to fight against the injustice.

Any reader can show their sympathy while they move with the struggle of Kino in the jungle where he is followed by trackers. At the moment, when Kino wants to kill them, when he tries to do that then family song comes in his head which give power to him. It is written in the novel as, "The family song was alive now and driving him down on the dark enemy. The harsh cicada seemed to take up its melody and the twittering tree frogs called little phrases of it" (739).

While Kino and his wife Juana return back from the difficult night which they spend on the hill, they become star there that all give care while they walk on the city:

And as they walked through the stone and plaster city brokers peered at them from barred windows and servants put one eye to stilted gate and mothers turned the faces of their youngest children inward against their skirts. Kino and Juana strode side by side through the stone and plaster city and down among the brush houses, and the neighbors stood back and let them pass. (741)

Here on the one side, all the people look at them, on the other side, their tribe follows them. It seems that all the other members of their tribe know them and they follow.

While Kino walks, his eyes changes, his vision is changed that he sees Coyotito lying in the little care with the top of his head shot away. He changes his vision and makes it clear. So he is revolutionary character. When he finds that he cannot escape out of the social discrimination and he knows that anyhow the oppressors are just trying to capture his pearl. He knows the reality. In the term of Marx, he knows the class conflict or struggle and in the term of George Lukas, he

understands the social reality so he becomes a Marxist there. That's why he flings his pearl back to the ocean. It doesn't mean that he is losing his hope but he is raising his strong voice symbolically by flinging the pearl. It is not a simple thing that Kino does. It is a great and a inspirable thing for any Marxist. So what he does is he raise voices in different forms against the social suppression.

The Pearl portrays the themes of greed and it is also the novel of lost dreams. As the story progresses, we can see the change in the character Kino. At first, Kino thinks that money is everything in life but gradually he realizes that it is not always the most important thing in life. Here, the matter is more important than the thought or consciousness. So we can call this novel a Marxist interpretation of contemporary society.

Marx has seen the vertical hierarchy in the society which is also depicted in the novel. We can see the two structures; super and base in the society as well as the different forces of production. The forces which directly support the capitalist thinking in the novel are doctor, shopkeeper, priest etc. They always support the class-division in the society. According the capitalist design, they enter into it and support it. Which later help the capitalist to suppress the proletariat group of people.

Mexican Indian tribe can be considered as proletariat group in the novel. This is the marginal group in the novel. As a protagonist, Kino also represents it. He is the most suppressed one in the novel. It is done because he is people from the lower tribe as the capitalist's division. So Steinbeck tries to bring him in the central position by making him hero of the novel. To bring the marginalized group into the mainstream of the nation is the job of Marxists and what Steinbeck's done in the same.

Coyotito symbolizes the condition of poor classes. Which is not cured in the novel. The scorpion in the novel is the symbol of capitalist who sucks the blood of the common people and kills them. Coyotito is not only suffered due to it but the whole marginalized people have been suffered and the reason for it is the power hierarchy

made by the oppressor group. It also shows that Steinbeck's theme of writing is for humanity. He tries to sympathize Kino and his family especially the sufferers. Here he is writing for the people and welfare of the humanity.

This novel also supports the political and philosophical stand of Steinbeck. Throughout his life, he stayed close with Marxist philosophy. So he writes in favour of common people. We can see the situation where the people are alienated by the capitalism. In the novel protagonist Kino and his wife and child are alienated from their true capacities that even after getting the pearl, they couldn't make sense and they couldn't treat the baby.

The social, political and cultural systems are shaped by exploitative social relations in the novel. The relation between the layers and Kino or between doctor or priest and Kino is shaped by what the Marxism called exploitative social relations. What creates class divisions? The divisions are explicitly shown in the novel. So it is a definite shape which has distinct social background i.e. social reality. As the Marxist's argument, it is the reflection of society.

The town is presented as a symbol of capitalism. It is not simply a symbol but a part of capitalism which creates mystery and suppresses the proletariat. In novel it is shown as. "A town is a thing like a colonial animal. A town has a nervous system and a head and shoulders and feet. A town is a thing separate from all other towns so that there are no two towns alike. And a town has a whole emotion how news travels through a town is a mystery not easily to be solved" (705).

The novel gives the hope and optimism to Kino. Once he hopes to get success and he says before his neighbours. "My son will go to school" (708). Marxism brings the hope and victory to the common people and here hope is shown.

As the novel progresses, the true nature of capitalistic society is presented in the character doctor. After checking Coyotito. he asks, "When do you think you can pay this bill" (112). In the answer of this question when the Kino says, "When I have

sold my pearl. I will pay you" (712). Their doctor shows more interest with him. So here for the doctor not the treatment and service but the money matters.

Kino's hope increases as the novel progresses. He further says to his wife. "This is our chance. Our son must go to school. He must break out of the pot that holds us in" (714). Moreover, he becomes strong and gets energy for struggle against his and his tribe's enemy. Steinbeck writes, "For a long moment Kino looked out into the darkness and stepped outside" (724). When he was attacked by enemies and urged to throw the pearl by his wife Kino says, "In the morning, we will take our canoe and we will go over the sea and over the mountains to the capital, you and I. We will not be cheated. I am a man" (725). It is not his escape from the danger but his voice against his enemies that he says proudly "I am a man" (725).

To show the social oppression, Steinbeck draws the clear picture of their houses. It is given in novel as. "The house of Juan Tom's was almost exactly like Kino's house: nearly all the brush houses were a like, and all leaked light and air, so that Juana and Kino sitting in the corner of the bother's house could see the leaping flames through the wall" (728). Hence we can put a great question i.e. why the houses of Kino's tribes are alike and they leaked light and air. It is not because of their fault but of the system. The system is capitalist. Drawing the proletariat is a process of empowering them as Steinbeck does in the novel.

By making the protagonist from the lower tribe and by involving the readers on the problems of them, Steinbeck has attempted to bring the lower people in centre i.e. in power. The images of the lower class people and their culture and environment are dominant in the text. Although, Steinbeck has created several dimensions, he has taken a side i.e. the point of view of writing which is totally Marxist.

The Pearl, therefore, is a novel of class-conflict and class division. Two classes are obvious in the novel: white people and Mexican Indian people. Different forces in the society which supports the super structure are visible and active

throughout the text. The rich people who live in the town are colonial and the place where they live is like a colonial animal. It is cited in the text as: "The town is colonial animal" (705).

Kino's strong voice against this hierarchy and social oppression is dominant in the novel. His inner voice as, "our son must break out of the pot that holds us in" (714) is powerful in the text. There are different ways for fighting against social oppression. Many of them have been used by Kino: Sometimes voice, sometimes inner voice, sometimes weapons. These different means can be taken as a strong voice, which can create the unity among the Mexican Indian tribe and break the vertical hierarchy which is made against them.

Once Kino takes the pearl as his most important thing in life, he says "Pearl has become my soul" (730). Later he flings it into the ocean when he finds it as an oppressor group's member, "He flung the pearl and looked it go" (742). So as he gains knowledge he realizes the reality.

In the novel basically Kino struggles against the poverty. He fights, many times to save the pearl. He thinks that if he saves the pearl, he can save his son from the evil, he can save his family from ruin and he can save his tribe from famine and starvation, his son, family famine and starvation. He kills people and he is ready to kill the enemies. Kino says "I've to kill the trackers and there's no any alternative" (738). It doesn't show his cruelty but his way for freedom – freedom from all the discriminations, oppressions, divisions and obstacles.

In the novel *'The Pearl'*, the pearl is a symbol of capitalism, aristocracy, which is indecent or lucent. As the capitalist system attracts the people and controls them, the pearl also becomes a success to control and rule Kino for long time. Ultimately the protagonist, Kino realizes that and throws it. Then he rejects each and every form of capitalism and each and every force that enables the system's existence. The throwing

of the pearl can be taken as throwing of the capitalist system and strong voice against the system which I have taken as main point of the thesis.

V. Conclusion

The Pearl is a visible picture of social oppression and voices against it. There is conflict between classes. The cause of the conflict is the oppression. The society and the people in the novel are somewhere oppressor and somewhere oppressed. The higher class or rich people of the society, educated and superior group, elite class and so-called higher tribe suppressed the lower class and lower tribe in different forms. The characters and group, who tries to escape from that suppression get more troubled by the opposite group or people. So it is a portrayal of social oppression. The protagonist of the novel, Kino, who represents the Mexican – Indian tribe always tries to oppose or remain in opposition to the social oppression. His inner voices or thoughts are so strong that they seemed like a weapon or a sword, whatever he does (even violent acts) to oppose the discrimination or suppression can be taken as voices against the social oppression. He raises voices against it which becomes the voice of his family Mexican Indian.

The Pearl has shown the psychological and physical conflicts. The Protagonist of the novel, Kino and his family and his tribe has been oppressed by the higher class, rich people and so-called high tribe. The cause of the discrimination is economic condition and race, and culture.

Class struggle is the main conflicts. Protagonist struggles against the oppressor from the beginning to the rebel is violent, it is voice against the domination.

Pearl is a tool to fight in the Pearl. The flinging of the novel has reflected the strong social reality. Steinbeck talks about the class struggle between higher class and lower class and high tribe and low tribe.

The problem of common people, poor people are presented in the novel. It is a novel of ordinary people of ordinary tribe. So the analysis has been made through the Marxist theory. The novel is full of protest, uprising clash, rebel revolution.

The Pearl by John Steinbeck also presents the social reality or *The Pearl* is the reflection of reality, where we can get the true picture of clash between the Mexican Indian people and the White people. There is combination between the particular traits and general movement of history in the novel. So the novel is a true picture of contemporary society.

There are problems of labours and also the solutions to it. Trapped in this exploitative relationship, with no stake in the fruits of their labour, workers become alienated, not only from their work but from true creative potential. The capitalist system therefore by its nature, breeds conflict between working and owning class. This conflict will inevitably spark a revolution leading to socialism, under a dictatorship of the proletariat and ultimately to communism, a classless society in which the state will wither away. *The Pearl* is here an expression of consciousness, which is determined by social being and is here usually characterized by struggle in which the differences and conflicts within a society are fought out.

Steinbeck depicts the voice against the patriarchal property which is one of the many causes of social oppression. John Steinbeck is actually retelling of a Mexican folktale, the story of a poor fisherman and his wife and a baby when the fisherman, Kino finds an extraordinary Pearl. He hopes it will bring comfort and health to his family, but discovers that the rare gem is instead a conveyor of greed, envy and ultimately death.

The tragedy of Kino is the cause of capitalist society which always tries to dominate the common people. Here Kino's expectation has gone into vain. It shows that all the expectations of poor people goes into vain. Thorough study of the novel has become possible only through the Marxist theory.

Steinbeck spends most of his time with working class people and write about them. His most of writings belongs to that class. He speaks against the domination,

suppression. Through the medium of his character Kino in *The Pearl*, He resists discrimination.

As a symbol of common people and common tribe whatever Kino does in the novel is his voices against social oppression. Even weapons are used here which are essential in the dialectical process and class struggles. So the theme of the novel is voice against the social oppression.

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