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Mis-Representation of Hispanic culture in Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat*

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This is to certify that Miss. Bishnu Maya Timilsena has completed her dissertation entitled "**Mis-Representation of Hispanic culture in Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat***" under my guidance. Therefore I recommended this dissertation to be submitted to the central department of English for final examination of Viva Voice.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “ **Mis-Representation of Hispanic culture in Steinbeck’s *Tortilla Flat***” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Bishnu Maya Timilsena has been approved by the undersigned memberS of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

John Steinbeck, a prolific American novelist, centers most of his novels in Californian experiences. His *Tortilla Flat* is an excellent work in the field of American novel that reveals the Hispanic ethnic experience of 1920s and 30s. It appropriately treats the transitional phase in American history that is the Great Depression. The force Hispanic ethnicity had been destroyed their identity and the sense of self worth by Anglo-American society. Hispanic, tradition and culture were dominated and marginalized by the Anglo American system. Steinbeck is in the view of acquiring spiritual as well as economic empowerment as essential factors for Hispanic community to recover their identity and sense of self-worth.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the novel, *Tortilla Flat*, John Steinbeck has focused on the Paisanos, a Mexican American Hispanic group. Paisanos have been neglected and marginalized by Anglo-American society. These ethnic groups have the habit of consuming wine to avoid the real situation in which they live in. In *Tortilla Flat*, John Steinbeck portrays the predicament of Hispanic group especially Spanish immigrants during 1930s and 40s. Though Steinbeck seems to present reality of the society and time, his consciousness is shaped by the culture, norms and values of that time. This research looks on the general attitude of Paisanos that gives them space to represent their Hispanic ethnic identity in the area of Anglo-American System. The purpose of this research is to find out how this Hispanic Community is different from Anglo-American society and how they create their life-style to challenge the authenticity of Anglo-American System. Steinbeck has presented the situation of a marginalized Hispanic ethnic group Paisanos. These Hispanic communities have been struggling with American society to get equal rights but the author has represented them as helpless and jobless immigrants.

John Steinbeck, American novelist Journalist and film maker, born in California, too his native state as the background for his early short stories and novels describe the lives, social and cultural status of those Hispanic ethnic working people on the land with racism, immigration and understanding. *Tortilla Flat* is a California coastal city of Monterey, inhabited by the Paisanos, a hardy. Simple race of men descended from the Spanish, the Indian, and the Mexicans. Steinbeck focused on the people of California. He intends to bring out the unspoiled beauty of the people though they are thieves, Womanizers and drunkard. Steinbeck portrays the Hispanic community as having as much moral virtue and largeness of heart as the chivalric

knights of Arthurian tradition. Paisanos are rejecting the trends of modern living in favor of their more simplified life-style.

As a representative mainstream white society, Steinbeck portrays morally immigrant Hispanic community. This book is an expression of deep enjoyment and appreciation of being alive in Monterey of *Tortilla Flat*. It is the feeling of dew on the grass in the morning that shapes color of the country and the companionship of friends. In *Tortilla Flat*, Steinbeck toyed with issues of race and ethnicity in his portrayals of the Paisanos and Portuguese Americans. As a mainstream writer and one must not forget the one in control of the narrative, Steinbeck gazes at his ethnic fictional characters according to rules and prejudices of his age. John Steinbeck is a state regionalist fiction writer who left the imprint of racial stereotyping in this particular novel. Unmindful of issues centering on class, gender and race, endless generations of scholars have overlooked Steinbeck's ethnocentric views. Steinbeck, like most writers, was molded by the culture, prejudices and conventions of his age. One should not forget that Steinbeck, in the nineteen thirties, was living in the heyday of racial segregation and ethnic minorities, especially Latinos, blacks, and southern Europeans were looked at with suspicion.

The issue of race and the overall darker complexion of the Portuguese compared to people from a Northern European background is apparent here. All the characters in this novel possess a dark or olive-complexion namely, the Paisanos, Latinos, Chicanos, Indian, and Portuguese Americans. In the town of *Tortilla Flat* above beautiful Monterey lived a group of men called the Paisanos. They were drunkard, thieves, ruffians and Vagabonds, but they were also surprisingly good at a heart. When the World War I broke out, these Hispanic groups decided to enlist in a fir of drunken patriotism. In the novel Steinbeck was angling or literary pathos by

depicting Danny and his friends as loveable rogues in the picaresque tradition of Spanish literature. It is possible that Steinbeck is tapping into America's fear of the dark ethnic other. In addition, Steinbeck may have woven animal imagery into the core of *Tortilla Flat* as a means to express how much he was repulsed by them. His characters like the creator, have strong passions and overwhelming frustrations.

Steinbeck animates the depression era after World War I in the same manner as contemporary writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Dos Passos and Ernest Hemingway. His fame as a novelist lies in his realistic clarity, compassion and a strong moral sense, unforgettable characters, especially immigrants, are on his keen perception of human nature. This novel was written in 1935, many Hispanic, American Portuguese were depressed and alienated from the society. During that time many Hispanic communities were forced to fight in World War I but they got nothing rather than psychological disorder.

California was supposed to be the land of plenty of opportunities during the great depression. His experiences among the working classes in California lent authenticity to his depiction of the lives of the workers, who remain the central characters of his most important novels. Though controversial for the over socialist views enriched in much of his work, he continues to receive critical acclaim for his bestselling novels, several of which were adapted in to successful motion pictures and plays. The distinctly American perspective and journalist realism of Steinbeck's social protest novels struck an emotional chord with the reading public and exerted an important influence on contemporary literature.

1935 was the time of Great Depression. Due to the result of World War I and warfare in the Europe and the other countries people had become hopeless, they stopped to think about themselves. Writers started to write but their writing was full of

depression and despair. It seemed that the war was going to be happening just a moment later. There was scarcity of the food material. Wealthy people stored foods which created market problem. Steinbeck is distinguished for his lucid prose, engaging naturalistic descriptions, forceful symbolism, and the examination of the myth of America as Edenic paradise. Sympathetic to the plight of the impoverished and downtrodden, his Depression-era fiction offers poignant depiction of socio-economic condition and human realities in the American west during the 1930s. In depression era, most of the readers seem keenly interested in reading it as Hispanic ethnic identity and race relations as a conceptual term, by representing Mexican American geography, culture, religion and people. The conflict essence is in between Mexican Hispanic ethnic group, paisanos and the real state of America. And the novelist's supreme effort is to maintain the supremacy of Hispanic community by opposing the Anglo-American white culture.

It was the time, when America was dominant in the world. The dominant position of America was equipped by the novels written in that period. And the 19th century writing was helpful to extend American imperial policy all over the world. Steinbeck has to compare Danny, a leader of the Paisanos of *Tortilla Flat*, with King Arthur to the nice of the round table that Steinbeck models the paisanos after. They are not cultured or worldly people, but in their ignorance of modern technologies and ways of thinking, there is something enigmatic and appealing about them. They are truly free in ways that societal influence prevents other people from being. Steinbeck spends a lot of time during the adventures of the paisanos describing the landscape around them. The depth of the spirituality of Steinbeck's Paisanos character is another way of showing what redeeming characters they are. They all have strong consciences brought on most likely by their belief in God and the after life, Danny and his

paisanos friends are thieves, but they never commit a crime because they find it pleasurable to be doing something wrong or out of spite for some one . They only commit crimes when they can justify them to their admittedly loose moral system. Drinking was not a time killer to these ethnic groups, not a means of escape from reality. It was a social activity and a show of camaraderie, with the wine they could talk, sing and fight as equals. In this way, they were truly like the Knights of the Round Table and they represent Hispanic ethnic community.

Many readers discovered that Danny and the rest of the Paisanos live by their own rules they have little to do with the respectable "down-town" Monterey culture. In all his works, Steinbeck has expressed of the need of change in economic and social system of his time. He eloquently told the plight of poor people who were helpless powerless in fighting against the system that had oppressed them. He and industrialism yielded the capitalistic mode of production which benefits only the capitalist the minority and the actual workers who had hardly worked are marginalized. In his novel a forceful tussel between the classes and strong reaction against injustice and exploitation are basic thing, in this regard, he is a leftist wrier and his ideas are definitely sympathetic to the left politics. But it should mentionable fact that in most of his writing, Hispanic experience of common people are deeply rooted.

Many critics have given different criticism in the novel *Tortilla Flat*. Some critics comment on its political side, some comment on sentimental sides and other comment on technical side. *Tortilla Flat* has been commented by many critics from various perspectives. In "The Image of the Azorean : *Portrayals on Nineteenth and Early -Twentieth Century Writing*" Mary Theresa Silvia Vermette writes that the Portuguese in California were disgusted upon learning that John Steinbeck had

immortalized this ethnic group as dirty and stupid in *Tortilla Flat* (1935). She claims that:

To the leaders of the Portuguese colonies the recognition of Cabrilho was a means of securing dignity for the Portuguese immigrant and a reminder to the immigrant of this dignity during his struggle of adjustment and integration ... other allusions to the Portuguese, such as those about the women, are equally derogatory. It is no wonder that refute this image, not only cabrilho's statue, but with the week-long cabrilho festival held every autumn. (122-23)

Vermette is certainly right about Steinbeck's portrayal of Portuguese Americans in this work. Although this project agrees with her questioning of Steinbeck's sensitivity to otherness in his portrayals of minorities, her assertion that the erection of cabrilho's statue was in response to his negative portrayal of Portuguese immigrants in *Tortilla Flat* is incorrect and unconvincing. According to her, this ethnic group responded immediately with the erection of a statue honoring Joao Rodrigues cabrilho (Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo), the first European to visit the coast of California in 1542. With so much damage perhaps the statue might be the means to uplift the image of this ethnic group, that the Portuguese had their own noble heritage and could claim their own heroes.

Vermett's connection between the statue and Steinbeck novel is, without a doubt, a reflection of the time period in which she wrote "*The Image of the Azorean*", the mid 1970s, a time when ethnic minorities were gaining a greater visibility and attention. Such rhetoric must be understood in the light of the social, cultural, and political changes prompted by the civil rights and feminist movements in America.

From this comment, it becomes clear that this is an unreliable connection, it undeniably refers to a time in America when historical facts were, at times, overlooked because of the eagerness certain ethnic minorities evinced when wishing that their contributions be recognized by main stream American society and culture.

Vermette has given the example of another critic Augusto M.Vaz. In "*The Recognition of Cabrilho*", Vaz states that the nineteenth century was a "century obsessed with its own Anglo-American superiority and success and one that borrowed, directly and indirectly...from the concept Darwin; this was after all the period of Herbert Spencer and his social Darwinism" (151-52). In this regard, the representations of Portuguese in American literature, Steinbeck was shaped by this ideology, which we often associate with naturalist writings and writers.

So, his writing was the result of political unrest, depression, and poverty. His novel *Tortilla Flat* reflects the contemporary capitalist domination where innocent people are suffered and tortured by the imperial activity. In "Steinbeck's Mexican-Americans ", Charles Metzger defends that;

Steinbeck's Paisanos have refused to subscribe to those views of the world and of right conduct in it which would render them respectable and or understandable to such neighbors or readers as have bought the white Anglo-Saxon protestant ethic. They have refused essentially by way of defending their own positive, more liberal, more nearly aristocratic, romantic in the old sense, image of a appropriate life style.

(145)

This criticism shows that John Steinbeck was always in favor of minority. He struggled for the common people objecting the contemporary capitalist domination in U.S.A. He knows that capitalism is the cause for the suffering of the farmer's

industrial workers in the country. In short, Steinbeck values the Arthurian Legends and the paisanos too highly to demean either. By adding the language of the paisanos and their convoluted moral code to his novel, he elevates them toward Arthurian status, without demeaning them or the tales of the knights that he was so captivated by throughout much of his life.

Donald Pizer has argued that "American literary naturalism ...has been one of the most persistent and vital strains in American fiction" (ix) and Steinbeck has made extensive use of it even as late as 1939 when he published *The Grapes of Wrath*. As Leo Pap has shown, the Portuguese immigrants in America either had minimal instruction or were predominantly illiterate before and during the time period under consideration (79-81).

But another critic F. Ross Holland Jr. in his books *"The Origin and Development of Cabrillo National Monument"* notes that the Portuguese of California had, for a while, to compete with the order of Panama. "The Vision of the statue of the discover of the Pacific shore of the United States" ...had been conjured up by a now defunct - but at one time quite fashionable - organization known as the order of Panama" this group was "devoted to the encouragement and promotion of California's Spanish heritage" and it flourished in the decade or so prior to World War I when American society was discovering European nobility and traditions"(1-5).

Steinbeck has immortalized Big Joe portagee and Rosa Martin as filthy and sexually promiscuous. Moreover, they are the embodiment of practically all the negative stereotypes that American writers in general have attributed to the Portuguese. Still, if Portuguese Americans in Tortilla Flat are depicted in derogatory manner perhaps these characterizations appear in other works.

In 1935 John Steinbeck publishes *Tortilla Flat* which immediately became a best seller. Steinbeck's representation of Hispanic community is problematic in his *Tortilla Flat* because from the very beginning of the novel, Chicanos condition is shown to be very pathetic and they are represented stereotypically. In this way Philip D. Ortego comments in his *Fables of Identity: Stereotype and Caricature of Chicanos in Steinbeck's Tortilla Flat*.

Few Mexican American of Monterey today see themselves in *Tortilla Flat* any more than their predecessors saw themselves in thirty four years ago... To believe Steinbeck's descriptive diagnosis of the Chicano ethos in *Tortilla Flat* is to reinforce the most prevalent stereotypes and caricatures about Chicanos and portrait of Mexican Americans - ... is an injustice to the people whose ancestors -both Hispanic and Indian have been on this continent of centuries. (39-42)

Ortego says that Steinbeck has reinforced the most prevalent stereotypes of the paisanos which they are not. Even the attempt to create a linguistic representation of Spanish in *Tortilla Flat* by resorting to the archaic English familiar forms of address strikes one as flat today as yesterday's ginger-ale. Moreover, Steinbeck reveals his lack of awareness (about par for 1935) about the role of language in the lives of human beings when he wrote that the Mexican American "speaks English with a paisanos accent and Spanish with a Paisano accent." It means there is no Standard English accent there is no standard Spanish accent, though it is sure Steinbeck had castillion Spanish in mind when he wrote those words.

Ortego has given many examples of other novelist like William Rose Benet "Child like natives" and "silly braves" or "atrocious disregard for scruple" strike a note of emphatic disapprobation, for only the Mexican American, the Chicano, the

paisano has come to know the patent falsity of such words. Chicanos have never been "child like natives" though Anglo-American life in particular light perhaps Roth's representation of Jewish American life may be so refracted as to be repudiated by the majority of Jewish Americans In "*The Great Gatsby*" Fitzgerald verbally paints an uncomplimentary portrait of Meyer Wolfsheim, though the novel was not in the least intended as anti-Semitic.

In this way, different critics have given their view about Steinbeck's different aspect of writing where techniques, theme, style, motive and many other sides are observed. But none of them have explored the theme Hispanic community and ethnic identity. So, this dissertation, in this regard, raises the issue of Hispanic cultural identity to give the new height for Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat*.

Hispanic is a term created by the U. S. federal government in the early 1970s in an attempt to provide a common dominator to a large, but diverse, population with connection to the Spanish language or culture from a Spanish speaking country. Hispanic ethnic identity has complex structures having some relation with political, cultural, social and psychological aspects of human being. Any disturbance in these complex structures brings the identity crisis and invisibility of self as well as the social status. When the minority groups feel themselves as a dominated entity in cultural sphere by the dominant ethnic group, they try to go against the subjugating source. A kind of ethnic ego for their cultural ethnicity, for their ethnic existence, they challenge through the voice of rivalry and there comes the situation of ethnic representation. Ethnic identity is a 'discursive' construction that is a description in language, rather than a reflection of an essential fixed, natural state of being. The concept of ethnicity helps us to explore cultural practices within specific historical and political conjunctures. Ethnicity is concerned with relations and representations of

centrality and marginality in the context of changing historical forms and circumstances.

To sum up, Steinbeck prominent American novelist studied the condition of war and post war scenario of the world, where troublesome experience of nation, nationality, identity and traumatic economic depression seems visible in verbal artistic creation like *Tortilla Flat*. It stands as the social and cultural protest novel which speaks in favor of the poor down-trodden people and their dream for life, equality and prosperity. The national economy act of 1933 forced many immigrants and marginalized people out of civil service by banning both spouses from working for the government, women and other African Americans, Hispanic, Asians, Japanese Americas were more affected by this depression, they were marginalized. Unemployed whites in the America demanded jobs held by Hispanics jobs that whites had previously considered to be others their job and were transported across the border. Nearly half million Chicanos left the United States for Mexico, Monterey from America when they get nothing by normal society after World War I.

The issue, which this researcher is going to depict, is the challenge to traditional system created by American Anglo-Saxon in the process of domination to these marginalized groups, Paisanos. To maintain their Hispanic Ethnicity and Identity or to oppose American superiority, they started to live by their own ways either consuming wine or having sex.

The dissertation has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outline of the novel's raising issue, its problem and a short introduction of John Steinbeck with a short literature review. The second chapter discusses the theoretical modality briefly that is applied in this research work. It discusses about ethnicity and identity as a conceptual term. The third chapter analyses

the text to a considerable length. It analyses how the novel *Tortilla Flat* represents Hispanized ethnic condition of the characters. So, this chapter tries to prove that how Steinbeck challenges and questions the authenticity of the contemporary mainstream socio-cultural norms, truth and values which are deep rooted in American society. Finally, the fourth or the last chapter sums up the main points of the present research and the findings of the researcher.

II. Hispanic Culture

Ethnicity

The term 'Ethnicity' refers to selected cultural and sometimes physical characteristics used to classify people into groups or categories considered to be significantly different from others. In some cases ethnicity involves merely a loose group identity with little or no cultural traditions in common. In contrast, some ethnic groups are coherent subcultures with a shared language and body of tradition. Newly arrived immigrant groups often fit this pattern. For many people, ethnic categorization implies a connection between biological inheritance and culture. They believe that biological inheritance determines much of cultural identity. If this were true, for instance, African American cultural traits, such as "Black English", would stem from genetic inheritance. But this is not true-biological race and cultures are not the same thing.

Ethnicity is a cultural concept centered on the sharing of norms, values, beliefs, cultural symbols and practices. The formation of "ethnic groups" relies on shared cultural signifier that have developed under specific historical, social and political contexts. They encourage a sense of belonging based, at least in part, on a common mythological ancestry. However, anti-essentialist arguments suggest that ethnic groups are not based on primordial tie or universal cultural characteristics possessed by a specific group. Rather they are formed through discursive practices. Ethnicity is formed by the way we speak about group identities and identify with the signs and symbols that constitute ethnicity.

A nation is formed of a large community of people who shared a common history, culture and language living in a particular territory under one government. In other words it can be said that a nation is a collection of individuals united in

supporting a perceived interest. However, it is not sure that a nation is formed of different- groups sharing, in fact, the common politics but uncommon culture and language. In course, of history there can be different communities of people with uncommon characteristics. In this sense, there can be different ethnic groups, yet such nations usually face demands from ethnic group that remain unfulfilled.

Differences between them consist of history, Culture and language. If a group of people differs in history, culture and language from another group of people that is ethnicity. The term ethnicity' relates broadly to "the perceived shared characteristics of a social or cultural group. While the idea of religious particularity is that a group regards itself a distinctive because of its religious identity" (92). In this sense, it can be said that ethnicity is uncommonalities between and amongst the groups of people. Ethnicity concerns the perceived shared characteristics; other characteristic include language, race, territory or culture.

The tem ' Ethnic' is derived from Greek ethnos, meaning 'people'. It was typically used to refer to non-Greek people, so the term also connotated 'foreign'. In later catholic Latin usage, there was the additional connotation of ' heathen'. The noun ethnic ceased to be related to 'heathen' in the early 18th century. The modern usage is closer to original Greek meaning.

The term 'Ethnicity' goes far beyond the modern ties of the person to a particular nation (e.g. citizenship) and focuses more upon the connection to a perceived shared past and culture. The corresponding terms for ethnicity and nationhood can be closer to each other. The world Book Encyclopedia talks more about ethnic group.

Ethnic group is a group of people with characteristics in common that distinguished them from most other people of the same society. Most

ethnic groups are minority groups with at least some values and institutions that differ from these of larger society. Since ancient time ethnic groups have resulted from migrations, war, slavery, changed political boundaries and other significant movement of people. (372)

Ethnicity can be studied more by associating it with minority group since they are almost the same. Most of the ethnic groups are minority groups and vice-versa.

The same book about minority group says:

Minority is a group of people who differ in some ways from the principle group in society. Members of the minority group may differ from the principle group, also called dominant group in speech appearances on cultural practices. The dominant group also has greater political and economic power than the minority group. In many cases, the dominant group discriminates against minorities that it treats them unfairly. (608)

Therefore, the ethnic and minority groups are almost the same. In most of the cases they are underprivileged, deprived of and discriminated groups socially, politically and economically. The dominant groups suppress the ethnic groups since the later are in minority in many cases like the representation in the government, less or no participation in development process, and no recognition in society. The majority of dominant groups treat them unfairly. Even the government discriminates the ethnic groups willingly or unwillingly. The fact is that the government of most states is formed of the representatives of dominant group. Consequently the minority ethnic groups are intentionally or unintentionally underprivileged. Another fact is that as already stated most states survive with numerous significant groups. There may not be cordial relationship between the dominant and ethnic groups because of the

difference in their history, language, culture and religion and even political ideology. On the one hand ethnic groups are dominated and on the other hand they are different from dominant groups. Since the ethnic group is in minority it does not have proper recognition and identity in the states.

The pioneering English anthropologist Edward Tylor wrote in 1871 that cultural traits are entirely learned. Subsequently, a baby can be placed into another culture shortly after birth and can be thoroughly uncultured to that culture, regardless of their skin, color, body shape, and other presumed racial features. Beside this, it is important not to confuse the term 'minority' with 'ethnic group'. Ethnic groups may be either a minority or a majority also is not an absolute fact but depends on the perspective. For instance, in some towns along the southern border of the U.S. people of Mexican ancestry are the overwhelming majority population and control most of the important social and political institutions but are still defined by state and national governments as a minority. In small homogenous societies, such as those of hunters and gatherers and pastoralists there is essentially only one ethnic group and no minorities.

Ethnicity is a relational concept that is concerned with categories of self identification and social ascription. Thus, what we think of as our identity is dependent on what we think, we are not. Serbians are not Croatians, Bosnians Albanians. Consequently, ethnicity is best understood as a process of boundary formation that has been constructed and maintained under specific socio-historical conditions. To suggest that ethnicity is not about pre-given cultural difference does not mean that such distinctiveness can not be socially constructed around signifiers that do connote universality, territory and purity. Thus metaphors of blood, kinship

and homeland are frequently implicated in the formation and maintenance of ethnic boundaries.

A culturalist concept of ethnicity is a valiant attempt to escape the racist implications that are inherent in the historically forged concept of race. As Hall writes:

If the black subject and experience are not established by Nature or by some other essentialist guarantee, then it must be the case that they are constructed historically, culturally and politically ... the concept which refers to this is 'ethnicity'. The term ethnicity acknowledges the place of history, language, and culture in the construction of subjectivity and identity, as well as the fact that all discourse is placed, positioned, situated, and all knowledge is knowledge is contextual. (446)

However, the concept of ethnicity does have some problem of usage and it remains a contested term. For instance, white Anglo - Saxons frequently use the concept of ethnicity to refer to other people, usually with different skin pigmentation consequently, Asian, Africans, Hispanics and African Americans are held to be ethnic groups but English or white Anglo-Saxon Americans and Australians are not. Here whiteness is seen as a taken for granted universal. By contrast, everyone else is understood to have been constituted by their ethnicity. However, it is important to maintain that white English, American or Australian peoples do constitute ethnic groups. As Dyer has argued, studying whiteness is about making whiteness strange rather than treating it as a taken for granted touch stone of human ordinariness. Commonly, Whiteness is equated with normality and thus becomes invisible so that we do not think it requires attention. Nevertheless, as Dyer notes, the recognition that whiteness is a historical invention does not mean that it can simply be wished away.

Although, even within a state, ethnic differences among the people bring conflict between them because there is cultural difference. For M.G.Smith "ethnicity connotes cultural differences that are quite compatible with the inclusive social order, either because they are differences within a common idiom or a permitted range, or because the groups which practice these variant cultures are numerically weak and are dependent portions of the larger society" (104). He further elaborates that "the idea of ethnic difference is less precise than that of cultural plurality. In some usages of the term ethnicity refers to race, in others to culture, and in yet others to nationality" (104).

Ethnicity and supposed racial groups are largely cultural and historical constructs. They are primarily social rather than biological phenomena. This does not mean that they do not exist but ethnic identity is often complex. It can change dynamically through time as situations alter. It can be created by self definition or other can define it for us whether we wish them to or not. Our stereotype of groups has a strong effect on how we view and relate to members of those groups. Definitions of ethnicity and race have immense political importance as well because they are related to power and control. Those ethnic groups that have a high public visibility generally have political clout. Those that are largely invisible do not.

For Anthony smith, "an ethnic group is a human population whose members identify with each other, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry" (41). Ethnic groups are also usually united by common cultural behavioral, linguistic, or religious practices. In this sense, an ethnic group is also a cultural community. An ethnic group is also an endogenous population, that is member of an ethnic group procreate primarily with other members of their ethnic group, something which is measurable in terms of characteristic. These differences, however usually do

not approach the magnitude of racial differences in that the generic differences within an ethnic group are greater than the difference between any two ethnic groups.

While ethnicity and race are related concepts, the concept of ethnicity is rooted in the idea of social groups, marked especially by shared nationality, tribal affiliation, genealogy, religious faith, shared language, or cultural and traditional origins, whereas race is rooted in the idea of biological classification of homo sapiens according to chosen genotypic and phenotypic traits. M.H Abrams defines ethnic group in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* as,

“The group that consists of individuals who are distinguishable, within a majority cultural and social system by shared characteristics such as race, religion, language cultural modes and national origin. There is however, much contention, both within and outside these groups" (209-10)

One ethnic group marginalizes and tries to disorient the other, especially minority groups that always results the misunderstanding and conflict while talking about Europeans, Abrams further elaborates that “ethnic literatures stress the role of culture-formations dominated by white European in suppressing, marginalizing, or distorting the achievements of non-white and non European peoples” (187).

Members of ethnic groups generally claim a strong cultural continuity over time which they think is distinct as well as superior to other ethnic groups. Even within the same state, one ethnic group distorts the achievements of the other groups. This ultimately brings strong conflict between the people from different ethnic groups. such situation increase the distance and the gap between different ethnic groups. Identity as one ethnic group denies the identity of the other that brings conflict among them.

In this regard, Leela Gandhi agrees with the animosities in terms of ethnicity. The majority uses the 'rhetoric of blame' to the minority to marginalize them. Gandhi writes that people are "caught between the harsh extremes of ethnic cleansing" (129). The preservation and perpetuation of essentialized ethnic identities bring the conflict between people. Gandhi rightly observes:

Working out of Thatcherite Britain, Stuart Hall observes the insidious - and ostensibly multiculturalists- procedures whereby the convention othering and exoticisation of ethnicity merely confirms and stabilizes the hegemonic nation of Englishness. In these circumstances, ethnicity is always already named as marginal or peripheral to the mainstream. (126)

Sometimes ethnic groups are subject to prejudicial attitudes and actions by the state or began to argue that conflicts among ethnic groups or between members of an ethnic group and the state can and should be resolved in one of two ways. Some like Jorgen Habermas and Bruce Burry, have argued that the legitimacy of modern states must be based on a nation of political rights of autonomous individual subjects. According to this view, the state ought not to acknowledge ethnic, national or racial identity and should instead enforce political and legal equality of all individuals. Others like Charles Tylor and will Kymlicka argue that the states must recognize ethnic identity and develop processes through which the particular needs of ethnic groups can be accommodated within the boundary of the nation-state.

In Samuel P. Huntington's view "ethnic expansion by one group leads to ethnic cleansing by other" (261). He further views:

Wars between ethnic groups have been prevalent in every era and in every civilization because they are rooted in the identities of people.

These conflicts tend to be particularistic in that they do not involve broader ideological or political issues of direct interest to non participants, although they may arouse humanitarian concerns in outside groups. They also tend to be vicious and bloody, since fundamental issues of identity are at stake. (252)

E.B. Taylor defines the term 'ethnic' in the Dictionary of Anthropology as "a group distinguished by common cultural characteristics, e.g. a linguistic group like Banta or Malaya-Polynesian" (191).

There is the feeling that one group has a mode of living, value and patterns of adaptation that are superior to others.

Vidhya Bhushan and D.R. Sachdeva commonly agree that ethnic feeling is "an assumption that the value, the ways of life and the attitudes of one's own group are superior to those of others. They are the only right ones while those of the others are inferior and wrong"(243). These writers further add:

They are conscious that their group is the center of everything and others are scaled and rated with reference to it. Each group thinks of itself the best as possessing the highest values and as having accomplished the most. This attitude of superiority is universal existing in all the times and in all the societies. (243)

In the similar vein, John Ret expects the situation "in which ethnically distinct groups meet only in the market-place. And while relations there are based upon exploitation of the harshest sort, each group can and does withdraw to its own independent quarter, where it is not subject to authority of the others"(338). The Point is that majority group dominates and oppresses the minority groups. There arises the conflict among them because such dominance is linked with the identity of people.

The members of minority groups share a sense of solidarity and a desire to preserve their culture, traditions, religion or language.

Ethnic group unity needs to be reinforced by a constant emphasis on what traits set the members apart from others rather than what they share in common with the outsiders. This is a universal means of boundary maintenance, or defense, between ethnic groups. Ethnic symbols are convenient markers from making 'we' and 'they' distinctions and are focal points for racism and other unpleasant manifestations of ethnocentrism. They also make in group differences. In the United States, for instance, they help propagate the myth that there is a single, coherent American Indian, ethnic group. The same goes for Hispanics, European, American, African, Asian Americans, and pacific Islanders.

People in political and economic power usually define their own ethnic group as being superior and others as being inferior. This can be done by laws that restrict rights and privileges. It also can be done in subtle pervasive ways even when ethnic favoritism is officially legal. For example, throughout much of the 20th century in American, 'white' became identified in popular literatures, films and the mass media with intelligent, good, pretty and successful, while 'black' was identified with the opposite such things which brings conflict among the people and ultimately betrays the relationship.

Identity

Identity is an issue that emphasizes the identity of a subject as a representative of one or another group. Identity involves intense desire for establishing existence and space by replacing fixed, coherent and stable assumptions through doubt and uncertainty. Fueled by political struggles as well by philosophical and linguistic concerns, identity emerged as the central issue of cultural studies in 1990s. It is the

topical issue in the contemporary study of culture with many ramifications for the study of race, gender, class, sexuality and subcultures. so the politics of feminism, of ethnicity and sexual orientation, among others have been high prolific concerns intimately connected to the politics of identity.

Identity is umbrella term used through the social science for an individual's comprehension of oneself as a discrete and separate entity. Being a specific group, community, religion, race, sex, geographical and political territory is an identity of a person. It refers to the capacity for self reflection and awareness Association and disassociation of a man to the particular society itself is the identity. The personal self relates to social environment. The role of person arises in two types; of collective and individual. The external environment has deep impact upon the human being. Many peoples gain a positive sense of self-esteem from their identity group, which furthers a sense of community and belonging.

Identity is questioned when something considered to be fixed is displaced by the experience of uncertainty. Koben Mercer presents similar view on identity and says, "Identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis; when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty "(275). The notion of identity is elusive and often becomes a subject of doubt unless it is in crisis. Crisis of identity results from the lack of location to a specific culture, society or nation. Globalization has altered the relation between western and other culture by taking away the sense of identity of individuals across the nation.

Individual identity is the idea of core "self", this can be seen as the core identity of a person, untouched by society. The individual may contrast the self with social norms that self is unrelated to social processes for reasons. His intuition and social interaction dissect him from the collective behavior to the personal behavior.

The social theorists believe that the existence or behavior of individuals is derived from the social process that take place around them and that " the social process of experience of behavior is seen as logically more important and prior to individual and individual experience" (223).

Individual is an essence, which can be signified with individual tastes, beliefs attitudes and way of thinking. So identity is concerned with sameness and differences. Identity is the best understood not as a fixed entity but dynamics, emotionally charged description of ourselves cornel west says that identity is ' desire for recognition, quest for visibility the sense of being acknowledged, a deep desire for association" (16). A person has recognition in the society. He is known as a member of a society. The association with community is the sense of protection and security.

The concept of perfection and completion of the person is cultural whole. One is identified with the pattern of social norms and values. The costumer's self customs are the complementary part of a man. The geography and culture determine the mind of a man. One follows the curtain things which are particularities of the society. The tribes have his own rituals, music and arts. They have significant role on their life-style. Complexion, race, region and religion are collection identity. The interest, taste and his personal desire are the individual identity.

Identity is constructed by diversity of discourses, among which there is no necessary relation but a constant movement of determination displacement. Identity is a production which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted social constructions and can not exist outside of cultural representations. Chantal Mouffe views identity as:

The identity of such multiple and contradictory subjects is therefore always contingent and precious temporarily fixed at the intersection of

these subject position and dependent on specific forms of identification. The plurality, however, does not involve the "coexistence", of one by of a plurality of a subject positions but the constant subversion and over determination of one by the others which makes possible the generation of "Totalizing effects" within a field characterized by open and determinate frontiers. (152-53)

Identity for Mouffe is contradictory and multiple. He placed identity in a set of fixed as well non fixed. Identity of a subject is not fixed or finished, rather changing and unfixed. It is determined and constructed by the social cultural context. Identity creates spaces and never be totally fixed in a closed system of differences.

Perceived within the domain of cultural studies, identity is not concrete thing which exists their; has no essential or universal quality, rather it is discourse or regulated ways, identity is constructed by representations. The meanings of different aspects are changing but never finished or complete. According to Hall:

Persons are composed not of one but of several, sometimes contradictory identities. The subject assumes different identities which are not unified around a coherent self. within us are contradictory identities, pulling in different directions, so that our identifications are continually being shifted about if we feel that we have unified identity from to death, it is only because we construct a confronting story or "narrative of the self " about ourselves. (277)

Identities are social constructions and cannot exist outside of representations.

Identities are constructed through narrative, myth, memory and fantasy. Identities, thus, are the points of identifications, the unstable point of identifications, which are made within the discourse of culture and history. But essentialists assume that identity

exists as a universal and timeless core of the self which all possess, i.e. descriptions of ourselves reflect an essential underlying identity. To put simply, the essentialist view would be that the identity common members of a social group is stable and less unchanging, since it is based on the experience they share.

But Cornel West defines identity from a slightly different perspective. For him identity is the matter of desire and death. He defines:

Identity is fundamentally about desire and death. Here you construct your identity is predicted on how you conceive of death desire for recognition; quest for visibility; the sense of what Edward Said would call affiliation; the sense of being acknowledged; a deep desire for association ... and then there is a profound desire for protection, for security for safety, for surety. (15-16)

Here, West means to say that while talking about identity, we have to say that there are various ways in which human beings have constructed their desire for protection, recognition, affiliation, association over time and space, sometimes under circumstances not of their own choosing. There is also desire for safety and security. People express their identities as a matter of everyday cultural practice. Hence it is more rigorously in the situation when the identity itself is in question people often disregard the notion of identity when it is not questioned i.e. their cultures provide them stable identity. Identity is the matter of concern especially for minority and ethnic groups such as blacks, Native Americans, women who are marginalized and victimized by white males. Identity for a racial group is a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group. So, if they are unable to practice their common racial and cultural heritage due to different circumstances, they feel that their identity is in crisis.

If one feels excluded from the certain community that is alien, not belonging and belong to society are experience of immigrants and natives. Alienation is a feeling of not belonging. This feeling can be physical, mental, religious, spiritual, psychological political, social or economical and often it tends to be combination of more than one of these types. The individual always seeks the sameness and own periphery otherwise his existence in the unknown is equal to zero. Living in the contrary culture is challenging.

Hispanic Culture

The term Hispanic is derived from Hispanicus, Which was derived from Hispania; both of them Latin terms Hispanic is a term that originally denoted relationship to the ancient Hispanic. During the modern era, it took on a more limited meaning, relating to the contemporary nation of Spain. Still more recently, the term has also been used to denote the culture and people of countries from ally ruled by Spain, usually with a majority of the population speaking the Spanish language. These include Mexico, the majority of the central and South American countries, and most of the Greater Antilles.

People of Hispanic or Latino heritage have lived continuously in the territory of the present day United States since the 1565 founding of St. Augustine Florida by the Spanish, the longest among European American ethnic groups and second longest of all U.S ethnic groups, after Americans Indians. Previously Hispanics were categorized as “Spanish-Americans,” “Spanish-speaking Americans”, and “Spanish-surnamed Americans.”

The 1970 census was the first time that a “Hispanic” identification was used and data collected with he question. The definition of "Hispanic has been modified in each successive census. The U.S Office of Management and Budget currently defines"

Hispanic or Latino" as a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, south or central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race" (12). This definition excludes people of Portuguese origins such as Portuguese Americans. The U.S. Equal Employment opportunity commission encourages any individual who believes that he or she is Hispanic according to the US office of management and Budget definition Lanky Spanish culture or origin to self-identity as Hispanic (14). The United States Department programs encourage the self identification (15). As a result, any individual who traces his or her origins to part of the Spanish Empire may self-identify as Hispanic, because an employer may not override an individual's self-identification (16).

Hispanicization is the process by which a place or person absorbs characteristics of Hispanic society and culture. Modern Hispanicization of a place, namely in the United states, might be illustrate by Spanish language, media and business. one of the reasons why the assimilation of Hispanic in the U.S is not comparable to that of other cultural groups is that Hispanic and Latino Americans have been living in some parts of North America for centuries ,in many cases well before the Anglo culture became dominant. For examples California, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico (1598), Arizona, and Florida have been home to Hispanic peoples since the 16th century, long before the U.S gained independent from Great Britain. These and other Spanish speaking territories were part of the viceroyalty of New Spain, and late Mexico, before these regions joined or were taken by the United States in 1848. Some cities in the U.S.were found by Spanish settlers in the 16th century prior to the creation of the Thirteen colonies, New Mexico was founded in 1604; therefore, in some parts of the U.S; the Hispanic cultural legacy is older than Anglo-American origin for these reasons, many generations have largely maintained their cultural

traditions and Spanish language. Many Hispanics who can trace their ancestry to the original Spanish settlement of the U.S southwest, these communities are known within the Hispanic community.

Today, Spanish is among the most commonly spoken first languages of the world. History has shown us the widespread influence of Hispanics in shaping the U.S geographically, politically and socially. Hispanic and American relations can trace their roots to the beginning, when continents, the North and South Americans were still forging their histories and regional identities. Thus the Hispanic American cultural identity like the African Americas, have been struggling against discrimination and poverty, lack of education, and low economic power.

Hispanic American is an ethnic term used to categorize any citizen or resident of the united states, of any racial background, and of any religion, who has at least one ancestor from the people of Spain or any of the Spanish - speaking countries of the Americas. The three largest Hispanic groups in the United States are the Mexican American, Puerto Ricans and Cuban Americans. Hispanic Americans are also referred to by others, and some Hispanics Preferred to be known, as "Latin's".

Before the United States entered World War II, Hispanic Americans were already fighting on European soil in the Spanish Civil War. The Spanish Civil War was a major conflict in Spain that started after an attempted coup d'état by parts of the army, led by the Nationalist General Francisco. Franco, against the government of the second Spanish republic. Hispanic Americans fought on behalf to both of the factions involved, the "Nationalists" as members of the Spanish Army and the "Republicans" either as members of the Abraham Lincoln International Brigade or as aviators in the Yankee squadron (1895-1954).

Hispanic culture was dominated by the ideology of the white Christian male. After the civil war the non materialistic ethos of puritan self surfaced up in the term of departmental stores and massive industrialization. This ugly face of the pristine puritan self got a further blow of capitalism. The underprivileged or minority groups in the American society-Hispanic, non-Christians, non-white, non-males and other most faith on the imposed belief of puritan values were openly emerged only after 1950s and 60s, though it was in its succeeding period such as 1920s and 1930s onwards. In the later half of the century, the Hispanic culture was nourished more than the Anglo-Americans. Those oppressed by Anglo-Americans and their social ethos. Hispanic, Marxist, Feminist, Black, Chicanos, Paisanos and other such groups developed their own culture as representative way, which opposed the American white.

Since the 1960s, illegal Mexican immigrants have met a significant portion of the demand for cheap labor in the United States. Fear of deportation makes them highly vulnerable to exploitation by employers. Many employers, however, have developed a 'don't ask, don't tell' attitude, indicating a greater comfort with or causal approach toward hiring illegal Mexican nations known as Wetbacks (it turned into an ethnic slur against anyone of Hispanic descent, nearly the same tone like nigger is to Africans-Americans). Occasionally, tensions have risen between Mexican immigrants and other ethnic groups because of increasing concerns over the availability of working-class jobs to Americans and immigrants from other ethnic groups. However, tensions have also risen among Hispanic American laborers who have been displaced because of both cheap Mexican labor and ethnic profiling. At the same time many Mexican Americans have struggled with defining and maintaining their community's identity. In the 1960s and 1970s, some Latino and Hispanic student

groups flirted with nationalism and differences over the proper name for members of the community Chicano Chicana, Latino-Latina, Mexican Americans , or Hispanics became tied up with deeper disagreements over whether to integrate into or remain separate from mainstream American society,

David J. Weber has written about conflict between Hispanic and Anglo-American in his "Journal of the southwest" like that ways 'The united states government, responding to the widespread belief that growing numbers of immigrants from Mexico threaten the economic well-being of united states citizens and undermine their shared values, has tried to slow the flow of undocumented immigrants by raising physical and psychological barriers along the border" (2). Mexico in need of foreign exchange for its troubled economy and a safety valve for acute unemployment and underemployment of its citizens, has pushed the united states to adopt a less-restrictive border policy and has worked to promote better treatment of its nationals in the united states.

The embryo of Hispanic culture in American society was visible in the early decades of the 20th century. During this period the oppressed American belonging to marginalized socio-economic classes, ethnic groups, Hispanic ethnic community, had lost faith in Anglo-American system. Powerful members of society create some kind of conditions that are suitable to them in their group, society or in a nation which are accepted willingly or unwillingly by other members through acculturation. The long run Anglo-Americas culture establishes some kind of freedom as well as restrictions and brings the society in its boundary. The conditions, norms and values of it are accepted by society as truths and measurement of judgment that in the field of literature, law and customs or in culture. In connection to the concept of power and truth Michel Foucault says that "truth is formed by power and truth changes when

power changes (Foucault' power and Truth'') Therefore Anglo-American system is a kind of doctrine system which is formed by power in a society. This discourse takes on the form of dominant culture of the society there by creating homogeneity at the surface level by repressing heterogeneous cultures within the society.

There are so many ways how the Hispanic culture has influenced our society. The Spanish language is one of the most spoken languages in the United States. The Hispanic American cooking, fashion, music, and film, literature and the arts politics and social issues, parenting and romantic relationship and even traditions that trace their roots to Hispanic cultures.

III. Mis-Representation of Hispanic Culture in Steinbeck's

Tortilla Flat

John Steinbeck, a twentieth century state regionalist fiction writer, in *Tortilla Flat* represents the Hispanic community of the 1930s and 40s American society. These groups in this novel are excluded from the society and struggled hard for their existence. It was the novel experience of large number of immigrants from countries known as the "New Common Wealth" who were committed to the laws norms of the society. These large groups saw no need to abandon their religion traditions or their cuisines or their language, which led to realization that assimilation was not the only means of incorporating immigrants into the society. And that integration offered, as well as a more practical way forward, as well as a more liberal and ethically acceptable one.

If a nation is a Hispanic cultural society and a person's sense of self worth is intimately and unavoidably bound up with their cultural identity then the state, it can try to destroy the multicultural dimension of the society by rooting out all cultures other than a single culture one which will become dominant. The term Hispanic referred to the manner in which Spanish immigrants who came to the united states at the end of nineteenth century were encouraged to think of themselves as Americans, they eventually becomes fully as a part of the bright new alloy. Not only was this of course intended as description of what was occurring in the USA, it was also in the light of social philosophy at the time.

To believe Steinbeck's descriptive diagnosis of the Chicano ethos in *Tortilla Flat* is to reinforce the most prevalent stereotypes and caricatures about Chicanos, for Danny, Pilon, Pablo, Jesus Maria, the Pirate and all the other "childlike natives" which Benet enjoyed, are grotesque distortions of a people who have been so historically

maligned that they have come to be identified as forgotten people and as the invisible minority for Steinbeck to have cast the Chicano of Tortilla Flat as nothing more than a noble savage was to extend to our time a concept of romanticism which was already questionable in the 18th century when it came into vogue.

John Steinbeck, attributing the Hispanic cultural tenets to the paisanos or Chicanos to subvert decorum of American society. Though the California Chicano managed to escape "for a time" as Mc Williams put it, "the violence and brutality that prevailed in Texas " after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), which added the Hispanic south west to the continental territory of the United States, they nevertheless came in for their share of discrimination and economic and political deprivation . It was not until 1948 that the California school systems were ordered by the courts to this continuous segregating Mexican Americans in the public schools. Consequently, when we consider Tortilla Flat in the light of the actual circumstances of the Chicanos during the 30s, the "earthy, rollicking" flavor of the novel distillates into the kind of disapprobation we have for those who pick on old woman, children and cripples.

And the fact that some Chicanos who are Hispanic but politically radical have been eager to identify with the Spanish roots of their identity rather than with their Indian roots simply attests further to the kind of denigration, pejoration and discrimination Anglo American society has impressed on the Chicano for his Mexican ness . These Chicanos or paisanos speak Spanish languages as street language. Especially Danny used such kind of language to crush the fisher-man with strong feeling of dislike, hostility. He threatens the fisher men like as "Sicilian bastards, scum from the Prison Island and Dogs of dogs of dogs. Chinga Tu Madre, Piojo... Pon un concho a la Cabeza" (1).

Although these groups are representative as marginalized Hispanic community they have the strong feeling, tried to preserve their socio-cultural status, by their language. There is no one in the novel with whom the Mexican American reader can identify, though the characters, like themselves are as brown as meerschaum pipes, and have names like their own, and quite often use Spanish expressions as they may. The Chicano reader may feel a touch of pathos as Danny's demise as a man of property not because Danny is a Chicano, but because of the loss of the property. Such a loss represents still another dispossession in a Lang like of social abuses and inequities perpetuated by the Anglo American system on the vanquished.

In this novel, Steinbeck has considered with the portrait of Big Joe is objectionable, how is one to respond to it, since it is obviously the author but also the paisanos who treat Big Joe with such disdain. There are levels of ethnic sensibilities. Big Joe is an animal to his friends because he violates their codes and these are paisano values:

He didn't clean his rifle; he didn't shave; and once or twice on leave, he didn't come back... of the two years in the army. He spent eighteen months in jail, and that the Monterey Jail, only one charge was ever brought against him; Drunk and Disorderly conduct... When the war was over, Big Joe still had six months sentence to serve. Being drunk on duty. Striking a sergeant with a kerosene can denying his identity (he couldn't remember it, so he denied everything). Stealing two gallons of cooked beans. And going A.W.O.L on the mayor's horse.
(54-55)

However it is undeniable that in this novel Steinbeck creates a character that embodies practically all that traits most mainstream Americans abhor. In Big Joe Portugee I see no glimmer of industriousness, determination, and frugality.

Instead, it makes the acquaintance for a vagrant who prefers to remain locked up in prison as a burden for the taxpayers rather than work for his own livelihood. Big Joe portage is depicted as an anti -hero who prefers to be lazy rather than strive for military recognition. Clearly Big Joe is the victim of something over which he has no control. In chapter 11, Tia Ignacio has given animal imagery to Big Joe portage as "This pig... this big and dirty animal. It would be better for me if I brought some cows in the house out of the rain. Another man would say some little friendly word at least" (88). Because he is so lacking in initiative and quickness of thought, he can not discern the craving of her libido. After giving up on him, she kicks him out, calling him a "pig! ... Big dirty garbage! Out in the mud with you!" (90). In this passage, as in many others, there is an under current of animal imagery in the very texture of the novel. With the knowledge that one can only expect from Big Joe portage the same type of behavior one would normally encounter in an animal.

This dissertation analyses the true story of Paisano culture and their reliance on wine. Hispanism is rooted within the nature of the characters though they live in Monterey after they returned back from World War I. Their life style, habit of consuming wine, their language represents the Hispanic culture. They organized the party though their life is in the plight of homeless, jobless and poverty but these marginalized group Paisanos do not dream about amusing huge fortunes and becoming wealthy and respectable men. They do not have such desire to be rich. Pablo and Pilon talk about their wish in their conversation.

Everybody would have too many diamonds. There would be no price for them, but wine always costs money. If only it would rain for a day, now and we had a tank to catch it in ... But good wine, interjected Pablo. Not rotgust swill like the last you got. (17)

For these Hispanic ethnic groups wine is more important than other things. Wine plays fundamental role in the developmental of the characters both physically and mentally. Drinking was not a time killer to the Paisanos, nor a means of escape from reality or anything crude like that. The characters personality and comradeship may be described as an opportunistic, manipulative and incomprehensible one, because of their state of mind and approach to diverse circumstances through the novel. Hispanic ethnic group certainly depend on each other, but encompasses an endless conflict caused by their nature and prominently, by wine. The arm stubble beard of Jesus Maria. "Ai, pilon. Ai, Pablo", he said hazily. "Que tomas?" Just drunk, "come have a drunk, my friends, Drink deep. There is plenty more" (21). By these lines we knew that Spanish influence is found all around the United States from restaurant to television stations and music. Jesus Maria also found in jungle and wants to drink because with the help of wine is object responsible for vanishing all courageous intentions present towards one another, thus it is what transforms them approach to eradicate responsibility.

Danny, the main character, and his friends are neglected by the Anglo-white Americans. The others-natives Indians, Spanish, African Americans and the people belonging to other races ...are marginalized from white culture .To shape their identity these others have been shaping their own ways of living to oppose the white elite culture .In this way, one of the best friends of Danny, Jesus Maria meets a stranger, a Mexican friend Caporal with a baby being led down the street by a police officer. The

wife of this boy is beautiful but eloped with captain, means she has been captured by captain, leaving her child and husband. The Mexican was pleading in Spanish that he had done nothing but policeman did not understand. Jesus Maria explained to the policeman about this boy who is his friend. These Paisanos group have taught to the boy about how to survive and how to revenge the captain, it means they also supported to the boy and encouraged him to fight against the system.

There was social hierarchy between powerful and powerless. The captain as a representative of white male captured a Mexican boy's wife and warns him to kill. This exploitation is unbearable to him so he ran away from there with his baby and be good friends of Paisanos group .The Caporal told his story with Jesus Maria and ethnic group Paisanos:

It is my baby, I am a Caporal, and he is my baby. He is sick now ; but when he grows up , he is going to be general ... It is good to have friends ... In Torreon I have many friends who would make themselves beggars to help me ... I have rich friends , but of course they do not know my need . I was a soldier in Chinuahua, and I was diligent and clean and kept oil in my rifle, so that I became a Caporal .And then I was married to a beautiful girl. I was glad. And we went into the baptism and when we came out of that church a captain with epaulets and sash and a silver sword saw my wife. Pretty soon my wife went away. (81-82)

The white man identifies himself with the white race and feels that he has a stake in resisting the dissipation of its racial identity. Important in this identification is the notion of " the absolute and unchangeable superiority of the white race. Due to the superiority of Anglo-White, the captain becomes a superior, threatens to Corporal and

took his wife. The person's relation to the group is one where his individuality is affirmed by his particular contribution to the group effort. Though the group here is also a source of power for the individual, it is a power that affirms life and his own identity. Tolerance is the best one can hope is the attitude of mind we look for in decent, humane people. Though Corporal had faced a psychological disorder by superior officer he again has to go back to Mexico to continue being a soldier in the hoping that one day he can be an officer. "I will go back to Mexico", said the Caporal, "I am a soldier in my heart" (86). The people who are in margin are more responsible to fulfill their duty, whatever the condition may have they faced. So, this ethnic group have moral virtue though they are thief, drunkard and womanizers like the knights of the Round Table, who were always symbolically learning something about their faith in their quests, the friends learned a lesson from their experience with the soldier. The friends, recognize the superior foresight and goodness of the Caporal are honored to have met him

All these Hispanic ethnic groups involved in soldier like other soldiers of mainstream culture. Nobody has shelter except Danny after they return from war. Danny has inherited two houses by his grandfather, but he never shows the power of his ownership towards his friends. He is careful about the life of his friends and poor jobless people who live in Monterey rather than his property. He always thought that his duty is to provide food and shelter to these who are helpless and jobless. Danny, Pilon, Jesus Maria help Senora Jeresina Cortez and her eight children when they approach in starvation.

He sat in Teresina's kitchen, gently brushing children of his legs. And he looked at Teresina with polite and pained eyes while she told of the of the calamity...The children shall not starve, they cried I shall be our

trust...We live in luxury' Pilon said...we shall give of our substance,
 Danny agreed. And if they needed a house, they could live here. (108-
 109)

Therefore, by these lines, it is clear that in Anglo-American society, the powerful and wealthy man runs after property and becomes more suppresser rather than they have earlier. But these paisanos group do not have such desire. Instead they tried to retreat back in to their normal life-style, to show how they are different from Anglo-American system.

The American people have become the most materialistic, the most opportunistic, the most individualistic, the most politically and socially irresponsible people in the world. Danny often used to sleep in forest, though he is the owner of two houses. In chapter 1, Danny put his head down and hurried for the shelter of the woods. It means Danny does not like materialistic policy. Pilon has taken Danny's house as rented. But "Danny never asks for it" and "Pilon never offered it" (11). Neither Danny is responsible to ask any rent nor Pilon responsible to pay any. That's way the relationship between landlords and tenants in Anglo-American society is rigorous but the relation between these Paisanos landlord and tenant breakdowns mainstream norms regarding their behavior. More than materiality their relationship is based on emotions. It becomes evident when Pilon desires to buy a jar of wine instead of giving Danny hard cash Pilon, after doing cleaning at Chinkee's place earns two dollars. which he intends to pay Danny as the rent but on the way to home in evening he buys two gallons of wine because he thinks that "If I give him hard money' it doesn't express how warmly I feel toward my friend, but a present, now And I will tell him the two gallons cost five dollars" (12).

Danny belongs to the Hispanic ethnic group of people, who do not have the cultural right in Anglo-American system. He understands that he is the victim of the bugs- both at symbolic as well as practical level.

Expression of emotions and thoughts is vitally important for remaining healthy. It helps one to work through trauma. It is a device that helps to ease of the frustration those results due to inability and powerlessness to take action. Powerlessness to physical action can be overcome by the power of art. Danny seems to have released this capacity of art and utilizes it to overcome frustration within him. Frustration is a result of deception or betrayal and lack of fulfillment of promises that were promised.

The novel, thus advocates freedom from materialistic cultural values. The Hispanic ethnic groups have discarded the principles of good and bad, moral and immoral as defined by Anglo-American society. They are bent on exploring their own psyches, consciousness and personal feelings and emotions. They have their own values and ways of doing things.

The alienated people see freedom through creative struggle. Tortilla Flat is a creative rebellion mode of expression. It is clear by these lines:

Big Joe, In his quiet way, was drink, More than his quiet way, was
 drink more than his share of the wine. Pylon took it indignantly and
 drank and again. But after all, he said philosophically may be if we had
 found gold it might not have good for Danny. He was always been a
 poor man ... Riches might make him crazy. Happiness is better than
 riches, said pylon ... If we try to make Danny happy, it will be a better
 thing than to give him money. (65)

These lines also advocate freedom from materialistic bourgeoisie cultural values. Everybody has the right to speak, work and create in his own way without any external control. when this sentence expires, Big Joe sets out to find his friends, wandering towards Tortilla Flat, he encounters Pilon, who is walking in a very businesslike manner, Pilon explains that tonight is "St. Andrew's Eve" (56), and that he is on his way to the forest to look for treasure. On St. Andrew's Eve, all of the mystic treasures buried by long dead pirates and criminals in the hills of Monterey were said to glow with unearthly light.

Though a good number of their exploits were aimed at supporting and bettering themselves the Paisanos also endeavored to help the less fortunate whenever an opportunity arrived. It is probably true that Pilon wanted some of the pirate's money for himself, Pilon looked distastefully at the pirate's dirty, ragged clothes. "Tomorrow", he said sternly, "You must take the seven extra two - bitches and buy some decent clothes ... for ordinary times these may be all right, but on such an occasion as this you cannot go into the church looking like such a gutter rat ... It will not be a compliment to your friends" (96).

These lines show their Hispanic ethnic nature of helping others and how they are careful to maintain their friends' standard. It is also reasonable to think that with his conscience, Pilon would have done all that he could with the money to improve the pirate's standard of living. In the end, they end up giving the pirate something even more valuable: human companionship. It is clear that ethnicity must concern itself with the relation between groups. It also includes ideas of a culture shared between members of the group.

The ethnic groups who live in Monterey, especially Paisanos or Chicanos, defy familial authority by refusing to adopt Anglo-American

Principles of family life. To get married, have children, get a Job, and enjoy a life of comfort were associated with Anglo-American principle of family life. Tortilla Flat talks about those people who don't care for familial responsibility and property, these duties were a sort of restriction on individual freedom. For them their own way of living is dear and they do not care to conform to the expectation of the straight society. Danny gets relief from his burning house. He said: "If it were still there, I would be covetous of the rant;" ..."My friends have been cool to ward me because they owned me money. Now we can be free and happy again" (35). These lines indicate that these Hispanic ethnic groups were wandering the premises of universalities taking drugs and rejecting their own property. They wanted to challenge and threaten authority by burning houses.

Moreover the people living on the margin of society don't find the values of Anglo- American system in their favor, rather people's existence is threatened and thus in danger. in this sense Tortilla Flat's purpose is to by- pass the exclusivist values of the materialistic society and lived in a world of creativity generating a different set of values of unrestrained freedom and an affirmation of life. By throwing off the controlling forces of society this research demands a total physical, mental and psychological freedom of people in society:

Clocks and watches were not used by the paisanos of Tortilla flat. Now and then one of the friends acquired a watch in some extra ordinary manner, but he kept it only long enough to trade it for something. he really wanted. Watches were in good repute at Danny's house, but only as media of exchange. For practical purposes, there was the great golden watch of the sun. It was better then a watch, and safer. For there was no way of diverting it to Torrelli. (112)

These Hispanic groups's activity of not using watches and clocks shows that they were rebelling against the limitations imposed by the Anglo-American system. This is an object that shows time and we have to conduct our lives as the hands of the watch guide and control us. Watch is also a product of bourgeoisie profit mongering and rejecting, it is equivalent to reject the values of that class.

The group of Hispanic culture emerged systematically in the American social area from the 1970s and onwards, these groups of Paisanos have paved the way for Hispanic culture from 1920s and 1930s. This Hispanic group Paisanos are socially, politically, economically and culturally marginalized minority. The bitter reality, that they have faced and encountered in the social area as part of it, make them indulge in drinking, sex and merry making. The pain that is buried inside them is kept inside it through these activities.

This Hispanic community even fight with each other and beat their own friend Big Joe to give justice to pirate. In chapter twelve Big Joe steals Pirate's 'Bull Durham Bag', in which Pirate has collected his money to buy a Golden Candlestick, and buries it in the front gate. He also takes out four- dollars from this bag and buys two gallons of wine. When Pirate knows about the stealing of his money he cries. Danny, Pilon and Pablo notice that Big Joe has stolen this money so they beat Big Joe while he appears in the door:

Danny thoughtfully took a string of rawhide from his pocket and tied the Portage's thumbs together ...Pablo threw a bucket of water in Big Joe's face . He turned his head and stretched his neck like a chicken ...Danny measured his distance carefully like a golfer addressing the ball. His stick smashed on Big Joe's shoulder ...Jesus Maria took the legs, Danny the shoulder and chest .Big Joe howled and rolled on the

floor .They covered his body from the neck down. Each blow found a new space and welted it. The shrieks were defeating. The Pirate stood helplessly by, holding his axe. Then Big Joe squalled with fear. (94)

These Paisanos groups are taking this kind of action for bringing justice to Pirate. These groups who represent Hispanic culture are responsible to bring justice and careful about their friends who falls in justice or injustice. They do not follow any kind of legal code to bring justice but they themselves take the actions and deliver justice on the spot. They have their own laws which directly differ with Anglo-Saxon's laws.

In the cases of justice and injustice, Hispanic law of nature is rooted in this novel. They have beaten to Big Joe not only to bring justice to Pirate but also to improve Big Joe's habit of stealing. When he was beaten by his friends, he cried, "for the love of Christ don't kill me ...I only took four, and I'll work and put them back" (95). He only steals four coins, which he uses to buy a gallon of wine that he would have shared with the friends if they had not been waiting to pounce on him. There is also the fact that he buries the bag of coins next to Danny's front gate, which shows that he did not plan to run away with money or abandon the group. Still, they come down hard and teach Big Joe a lesson, if not about morality, than at least about the results of breaking the trust of their particular group.

The Paisanos are represented as a group of simple who are isolated from larger society. When certain objects make their way into the Paisanos community, a vacuum cleaner, a gun they are at lost as to what the should do with the object and how it can be used. As is natural, Danny had been dying all along, but in the tedium of his monotonous days, he had noticed it and it had begun to drive him mad. Danny realized that no matter what he did, his life would have ended meaninglessly as it was.

He had volunteered for the army in the hope of doing something with his life, but had ended up shuttling cattle around the southwest. He had given his life, up to help his friends but the comfort that they found was unrewarding. Danny's lawless binge was an attempt to defy death and rediscover his youth, but he returned from it tired, having realized that his youth was gone.

Danny, say the people of Tortilla Flat, had been rapidly challenging his form. He had grown huge and terrible. His eyes flared like the headlights of an automobile. There was something fearsome about him ...Danny challenged the world ... who will fight? He cried, is there is no one left in the world who is not afraid? (140-41)

Danny's abnormal life had turned to be more normal. He was beginning "to feel the beating of time"(123). Freedom was again racing in the nerves of Danny .Finding himself to be alone in that gathering of his fellow beings and no one to match his spirit of re-establishing the social order, he imagines to be in fight with some invisible force. He goes out from the house. Neither other people nor his friends can check Danny to go outside. At last Danny dies and his house is closed for ever.

Ethnic identity has become the central area of this novel; at the end of the novel all of the Danny's friends became aware of their political, economic, social and religious positions in societies. The friends do all that they can to honor Danny's memory. They do not dirty his funeral with their scrubby appearances, and also chose not to participate in the immoral circus that his funeral becomes.

“Now they were horror –stricken, for in all Tortilla Flat they, who had loved Danny most, who had received the most from his hands, they, the Paisanos, were the only ones who could not attend Danny's funerals ...Ordinarily, their clothes were unspeakable” (144).

They honor him their own way by holding the pain in their hearts, and it is so unbearable that they cannot stand by the procession any longer.

Hispanic usually gives great importance to place and great value on looks and appearance as a sense of honor, dignity and pride. The features of Hispanic community are to believe on God and they have spiritual beliefs by the freedoms of their life style. They are strong believers in miracles and guidance from above. In chapter 8 Big Joe and Pilon have discussed about St. Andrew's Eve, which Hispanic community celebrates as a popular international holidays like Christmas Eve, and New Years Day. On St Andrew's Eve, all of the mystic treasures buried by long dead Pirates and criminals in the hills of Monterey were said to glow with unearthly light.

It is St. Andrew's Eve ... This was the night when all buried treasure sent up a faint phosphorescent glow through the ground. There were plenty of treasures in the woods, too. Monterey had been invaded many times in two hundred years, and each time valuables had been hidden in the earth. (56)

Pilon and Big Joe believed on such kind of spiritual faith and have made plan to dig up the treasure on St. Andrew's Eve. Pilon allows him, but he makes him promise that any treasure that they find will be given to Danny for his hospitality with the house. In the Hispanic world, religion has traditionally played a significant role in daily activity. The church influences family life and community affairs, giving spirituals meaning to the Hispanic culture. Whenever there is a little extra money, it is spent on candles to be burned San Francisco or other saints,

We must take this money to Father Ramon and tell him about it .Then he will buy the candlestick, and he will bless it, and the Pirate will go into the church. May be Father Ramon will say a word about him on

Sunday. The Pirate must be there to hear ... And then, Father, I promised the gold candlestick of one thousand days to San Francisco.

He is really my patron, Father. (96-97)

From this statement we came to know that the depth of the spirituality of Hispanic ethnic identity is way of showing what redeeming characters they are. They all have strong consciences brought on most likely by their beliefs in God and the after life.

Steinbeck's representation of the Paisanos in the novel is severely unsatisfied, where Steinbeck has reinforced the most prevalent stereotypes of the Paisanos which they are not. So Steinbeck's representation is an injustice to those Hispanic groups whose ancestors are both Hispanic and Indian. Steinbeck has negative attitude towards these Hispanic groups Paisanos, in which he identified them as Mexican Americans but not pure Spanish blood. Steinbeck reveals his lack of awareness about the role of language in the lives of human beings when he wrote that the Mexican American speaks English with a paisano accent and Spanish with a Paisano accent. For just as there is no Standard English accent there is no standard accent. It means Steinbeck has misrepresented to Hispanic culture in this novel. This dissertation is concerned with the representation of the characters type, but Steinbeck's presentation of the Paisanos has misrepresentation and injustice to Mexican American people. What Steinbeck presents about Paisanos is not a part of their culture rather his presentation of Paisanos is not more than stereotypical presentation.

John Steinbeck, being a representative of Anglo-American Society supports two mainstream societies indirectly but he only shows sympathy towards these Hispanic group Paisanos. He tried to show the real situation of this marginalized group as humouric way. He has presented these groups as they behave like "Childlike natives" and "Silly breavos." But paisanos have never been "childlike natives" though

Anglo Americans may have regarded them as such. And the authors' expression "Silly breavos" is a gratuitous paternalism which only the colonial mind could conceive. Therefore only the Hispanic has come to know the great social and ethnic damage perpetuated by the mythic representation of the paisanos of *Tortilla Flat*. In this novel, while Steinbeck struggles through an "alien" milieu as the voice of the narrator, the question of ethnic identification becomes important and crucial in determining the reliability of the representation. The truth of fiction, like history depends upon which doing the telling. Steinbeck's' intend is certainly not yet issue in reappraising *Tortilla Flat* by today's standards .But sometimes good intensions create their share of travails. In this case it is the travails which have been produce by stereotype and caricature of the Mexican American, whether in real life of friction which must be brought to task.

Hispanics are commonly considered a monolithic group of Americans, but this notion could not be further from the truth. In reality the various Hispanic subgroups reflect profound differences in ethnicity, culture and religion, and they have remarkably few characteristics in common.

This study examined the influence of ethnic background, ethnic identity, and cultural identity on conflict styles among Mexicans Americans, Hispanic Americans and Latino Americans. Anglo- Americans have always dominated a sense of discrimination and a practice of cultural differentiation towards other minority cultures that exists, within a society. The differentiation is created out in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, color and so on.

Therefore, Paisanos have represented their own separate ethnic identity by giving important to their own life-styles and believing on God which oppose the convention of the normal society. The key elements in the life of this Hispanic community in *Tortilla Flat* is an acceptance of a God and a church and religious

matters and lack of concern with material things and they give value of friendship above that of money.

IV. Conclusion

This research analyzes the Hispanic ethnic community Paisanos group who represents Hispanic culture with the socio-economic status and religious perspective. The title of the novel *Tortilla Flat* itself is a Hispanic word which means a kind a bread made by corn or wheat. The Paisanos are represented as a Hispanic ethnic group of simple people who are isolated from larger society. There many social problems that are explored in this research, including the treatment and perception of people who are poor, people who are mentally challenged. Consider all of the characteristics of the Paisanos that represent their Hispanic ethnic work habits, relationships, the physical place that they occupy, their speech, their dreams and explain what the character type of the Paisano is.

Tortilla Flat was an actual place in Carmel that John Steinbeck placed in Monterey. He took some stories about the Paisanos, a mixture of Spanish, Indian, Mexican and Caucasian bloods that lived in this marginal place consisting of shacks and, using the style of the Arthurian legends, spun these tales about Danny and his friends. They are meant to be humorous and serious at times and the characters are larger than life. Certainly no one could live as Danny, Pilon, Jesus Maria, Big Joe Portagee and the Pirate, consuming wine by the gallon, eating whatever they can steal and taking up and whoring with woman they want, but this is the point. The tales have an epic proportion to them like Mallory's *Knights of Yore* but from the vantage point of the New World. These ethnic groups have the habit of consuming to avoid the real situation in which they live in.

Together they share a great friendship which is based on huge trust to each other; we can say that their motto is "all for one and one for all". They are poor Paisanos, a mixture of Spanish , Indian and Mexican blood, live in the streets of a

town called *Tortilla Flat*. They live a quite happy life with only one concern to get in hold of the daily gallon of wine. The wine is the highlight of every day, but it can sometimes be hard for the friends to get because each gallon costs one dollar. But when Danny returns from the army and finds out that he is a heir of two houses, the lives of the friends change. Danny becomes a respected man in *Tortilla Flat*, now that he owns two houses, and his good friends don't have to worry about not having a roof over their heads as they rent Danny's second house. But the responsibility of owning the houses makes Danny feel a bit run down and the relationship to his friends is not what it used to be.

When the underprivileged ethnic group, feels suppressed, it may raise arms against the dominant group. The mobilization of a minority group's culture may be directed towards more than achieving development goals. Similarly, this Hispanic group also entered in to alcoholism to avoid the real situation. They returned from the World War I with the hope of doing something good by the Anglo-American system but such kind of hope turned in to pessimism. So, they became unconventional in the way of normal society. Such a group may also seek political autonomy of self-government. More than the political cause, the ethnic problems may be caused by the problems of language, race and territory culture. So the life style of this Hispanic group that is adopted by these Paisanos is out of support of the normal society. Each members of this group are not interested toward marriage and marital life, though they have girl friends. It means they want to preserve their Hispanic ethnic ethos and challenge to the elitist, oppressive, capitalistic and bourgeoisie social system which has marginalized this Hispanic community. They find their true Hispanic identity not in Anglo American culture and tradition but in rich and varied culture and tradition of Mexico.

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