

I. Introduction

Steinbeck was the son of John Steinbeck Sr. and Olive Hamilton. John Steinbeck was in his late twenties when America was the land of desperation. He was the representative writer of Great Depression of 1930s. in California which was supposed to be the land of plenty and opportunity during the Great Depression into a favorable environment that served to develop his inclinations and aroused his interests in literature. His mother's education influences him to become him as a writer. During the summers of his youth, Steinbeck worked as a farm hand, receiving first hand experience of the life of an agriculture worker. "I was a bindle-stiff myself for quite a spell. I worked in the same country that the story is laid in "(Cook 68-70). Steinbeck's major issues of writings include the concern of working class, downtrodden, disposed off, workers and impoverished people's miseries and hardships in their real life experiences because of their dream of quenching such condition to accomplish a prosperous life.

Dreams generally are regarded as the outcome of unfulfilled desires and wishes whereas American Dream contrasts in the way it is the immediate euphoric vision of wish fulfillment of the puritans together with their entrance in the New Found Land, America. The promises of American land, before and after the exploration of America shape its earlier form. What puritans and the European immigrants expected America as a land of infinite wealth, unrestrained freedom and unchallenged fresh beginning of life in the New Found Land is called American Dream. The same characteristics feature of the Puritan, who thought themselves to be the chosen people of God, was inherited by the American people because they thought to be follower of the same distinguished ancient lineage. The statement of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to everybody with no discrimination of race,

gender, class, ethnicity and others have an intimate relationship with the American Dream. It is a capacity that demands personal freedom in every aspect of life, equal right to have standard education, equality in available opportunity for jobs, wealthy and healthy and happy family-relation which enable to create an imagination of sophisticated farm and house. And, it engenders to construct a social order in which everybody strives to attain highest and fullest stature upon which they are innately capable to achieve it. Though, to some extent, some of the hopes become true, but at least a dream never comes into reality and eventually the dream turns into nightmare and failure. The extension of imagination supported by ambition can not let them accomplish whatever they want.

Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* exposes the same unquenchable hope in the lives of two migrants traveled workers, George and Lennie. When Lennie and George become impoverished and jobless, they set their journey to Salinas Valley, Soledad in California in pursuit of a new life, a new happiness, a new history and richer and prosperous future life. Their belief is to achieve the desired fruit through hard work. The motto of their initial journey into the dreamland of California is the search of prosperous future life. They regard the Valley of Salinas, Soledad in California as their dreamland or "Promised Land". The visionary utopian country, which they have in their head is their "American Dream". But the dream to create a perfect community in the "Promised Land" is not easy, for California is both beautiful and "wild" to sustain their dream due to prevailing capitalist system in it. They are unwelcomed, reprimanded for doing no wrong, beaten, threatened, mocked, shamed, treated not as human being but as animal as they are kept in the barn, and even they are under-paid by the boss, by his son and by others who dwell in the bunkhouse. Because the structure of California is maintained by capitalist principle. The ranch owner orders

them for hard work with the least pay because he knows the poor are compelled to work and they don't refuse. Neither they are fed well nor are sheltered in the bunkhouse nor get permanence in job and home. They are as isolated from this place as from their own land far behind. It is hard to survive for them in Weed and are exploited in the ranch of Salinas Valley of California. Often, Lennie is beaten mercilessly by the boss's son, Curley. And eventually he is killed in the process of protest against the cruelty and inhumanity laid upon him. George and Lennie's labor is also unrespected and George moves to the town of American River where he works in the whorehouse and spends all the earnings and returns to Salinas Valley without money. All of their efforts for better life become futile. The harsh reality strangles all of the bunkhouse inhabitants. Gradually, the migrant laborers begin to feel that the ranch in the Californian valley is not a paradise but it is proved to be a place of many trials and tribulations. Because of suppression, exploitation and oppression imposed upon the workers the wide hostility starts growing between the ranch owner and the migrant laborers that further shattered the migrant's dream of prosperous future life. And at last they are turned into destitute and miserable position. The condition of the poverty-stricken people like Lennie and George and many others is brought by the various forces of capitalism existed in California during Great Depression. Lennie and George's dislocation in California is not only because of the capitalist norm of the society but also by their concept, assumption and idea brainwashed by capitalism itself. The society gives high importance in advantage rather than the workers devotedly working there.

Since its first publication in 1937, John Steinbeck's novel, *Of Mice and Men* has been a subject of pouring down innumerable views from various critics. This novel is both widely praised and read with open heart and severely attacked as

propaganda. Thousands of copies were sold and immediately it became popular among Americans. Together with the wide familiarity of the novel Steinbeck has been ignored by some circles of critics as the novel deals with the criticism of the oppression and exploitation in the American society. Furthermore, its stand point is the social protest which raises the issues of poor, dispossessed, downtrodden, workers and their edenic dream of better, richer, prosperous and equality of life. It might turn out to be counterproductive to the oppressed and exploiter class of people who might denounce the novel as a propaganda.

Critics of different perspectives laid upon their views on Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*. Mark Van Doren criticizes *Of Mice and Men* for its unrealistic central characters, who are either too far above or below the humanity. In his *Wrong Number* Van Doren comments:

All but one of the persons in Mr. Steinbeck's extremely brief novel are subhuman if the range of the world human is understood to coincide with the range thus far established by fiction. Two of them are evil, one of them is dangerous without meaning to be, and all of them are ignorant – all of them, that is, except the one who shall be named hereafter. Far from knowing the grammar of conduct, they don't even know its orthography. No two of their thoughts are consecutive, nor for that matter do they think, it is rather that each of them follows some instinct as a bull follows the chain, which runs through a hole in his nose, or as a crab moves toward its prey. (275)

Doren, in this sense, seems to negate the thematic aspect of the novel as such the dream of Lennie and George. But he lays his focus on the nature of human instinct

through the characters of George and Lennie as two parts of the same person: one man and animal the other.

Dorothea Brande Collins sees sentimentality in *Of Mice and Men*. He argues that Steinbeck's short novel is excessively sentimental and its character are wooden and stereotyped. He confirms this idea of sentimentality in his "American Review 11, No. 1" as:

Who does not know by this time of Lennie, who loved to stroke soft furry things, but didn't know his own strength? Of Slim, with the "God-like eyes", Knight *sans peur et sans reproach* of the bunkhouse? Of George, who loved Lennie well enough to shoot him? Of "curley's wife", that wax-dummy girl who might have come straight out of the window of a chain dress shop, so glossy, so hard, so brightly painted – and so far from ever having drawn a breath? (104)

Warren French regards *Of Mice and Men* as a comedy and remarks that the novel is not a tragedy at all but instead a "dark comedy" about man's acceptance of his own mediocrity. He praises George and Lennie's "will to survive" even in a harsh reality in his *John Steinbeck and American Literature* as:

Despite the grim events it chronicles *Of Mice and Men* is not a tragedy, but a comedy – which, if, it were Shakespearean, we would call a "dark comedy" – about the triumph of the indomitable will to survive. This is a story not of man's defeat at the hands of an implacable nature, but of man's painful conquest of this nature and of his difficult, conscious rejection of his dreams of greatness and acceptance of his own mediocrity. (76)

He has focused only on the disintegration between George and Lennie and the hostility of nature upon human beings neglecting the main course of their journey-the journey to prosperous life in future.


Sunita Jain studies the role of evil in Steinbeck's short novel, *Of Mice and Men*. Jain in her "John Steinbeck's concept of man" declares that "Lennie for example, is not only a victim in the novel, he is also the instrument of destruction", (39). This remark even discourages the author's aim- the aim of finding a small house and a couple of acres of land that George and Lennie have dream of.

Paul McCarthy on *Of Mice and Men* as compared to *In Dubious Battle*, finds that the former has less emphasis on the political and more on the personal aspect. McCarthy's comparison between these two novels is seen in his "*Paul McCarthy, John Steinbeck*" as:

"*Of Mice and Men* and *In Dubious Battle* differ in that the former lacks widespread violence, class conflict, and Marxian ideology. They are similar in that the characters have working - class background and the story is set on large California ranches during the Depression". (57)

None of the aforementioned critics has explored the theme of the failure of displaced people, Lennie and George in the midst of capitalist structure of American society which counts profit rather than feeling and suffering of poor. So, for the contemporary reader, the economic failure of George and Lennie is caused by ambition and imagination occupied by them in the midst of capitalism. The principle of capitalism relevates the position of privilegde. Because of this fact, the ambition and imagination of George and Lennie to be economically successful ends in failure.

II. Marxism: A Theoretical Methodology


 Marxism is a critical category which grounds its economic, political and cultural theory of Karl Marx and his contemporary fellow thinker Friedrich Engels. It is supported by the major three points they have propounded. At first, they focus on the material production that determines the evolving history of humanity and social relation. The second is historical changes that produce dominant and subordinate classes engaging in a struggle for economic, social and political advantage. And, at last, they believe that human consciousness is constituted by an ideology produced in a particular era that helps to sustain the social, political and economic practice and system of ruling class. So, the ideology, the product of the ruling class, becomes dominant in any historical era and that embodies and serves to legitimize and perpetuate the interest of the dominant economic and social class of the particular time.

Karl Marx, an economist, historian, sociologist, and ideologist of the nineteenth century, deserves a significant field in the area of politics for propounding the theory of class though the concept of class had been in practice since the ancient philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, late Romans and early modern writers. For Karl Marx, it is the mode of production in any society that produces the features and characteristic forms of inequality. By mode of production he means the dynamic combination of : the 'Relations of Production' which refers to the economic relations between groups of people, that is form of class structure, whereas 'The Productive Forces' mean the techniques and technology in production. He categorizes two social classes: one exploited or productive class and the other exploiting or non-productive class. In the same ground of exploiting attitude of the capitalist, American Dream is structured. Since it is a dream shaped by the Puritan imagination of pleasure and

wealth it seems to reinforce bourgeois economic system. Marx, in the opening lines of his *The Communist Manifesto*, writes as: "The history of hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild –master and journeyman, in a word oppressor and oppressed, stood in a constant opposition to one another [...]" (79).

Marx is concerned with the forces of history and his view of history is progressive and, to some extent, inevitable. This view is prominent in *The Communist Manifesto*, particularly in his review of the overthrow of feudal forms of government by the bourgeois. He thought that it was inevitable that the bourgeoisie and the proletariat would engage in a class struggle from which the proletariat would emerge victorious. Marxism disproves the bourgeois economic, political and social mechanism. It initiates movement of proletariat against bourgeoisie by raising a voice in favor of proletariat. There remains extreme distinction between these two groups as bourgeoisie who owns the whole means of production and material things whereas proletariat refers to that group who doesn't possess any means of production but only hand. As the oppression from the bourgeois increases, the proletariat raises voice against bourgeoisie who with no toil possesses unlimited amount of money accumulated exploiting the proletariat. This is how Marx initiated the movement of proletariat against the bourgeoisie.

Ernst Fisher and Marek Franz have a similar view like that of Marx. They in *Marx in His Own Words* remark that:

Labour certainly produces marvels for the rich, but it produces privation for the worker. It produces palaces, but hovels for the worker. It produces beauty, but deformity for the worker. It replaces labour by machinery; it casts some of the workers back in to a barbarious kind of

world and turns the others into machines. It produces intelligence, but also stupidity and cretinism for the workers. (20)

For Marx the productive forces establish material precondition for the existence of production relations in a society. Similarly, the evolution of the productive forces is well dependent on the growth and development of the relation of production. Marx views that one mode of production produces the situation of transforming into the other:

[...] the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production [...] forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution [...], No Social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed and new relations of production never replace older ones . . . (*Early 425-426*)

Marxist tradition borrowed the 'dialectical' view of history from Hegel. The development of history is not random or chaotic, nor it is a straightforward linear progression, but rather a dialectical development. In every social organization, the prevailing mode of production engenders inner contradictions in the form of class struggle. When the capitalist mode of production developed, it destroyed the feudal mode of production, and changed it into a non-individual or social mode of production. Selden, in *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, seems to agree with Marx when he says, "However, while the mode of production was socialized, the ownership of the means of production was privatized. Workers, who had owned their looms or tools, eventually had nothing to sell but their labour" (30).

Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* explain the society has split into two great hostile camps. But Marx in *Das Capital* presents "three big classes of modern society" as wage earners, capitalists and landowners (885). Furthermore, he talks about the existence of other middle and intermediate classes too so as to analyze contemporary political situation and events. Marx, thus, has a belief in multi-class system that leads to socialism. Marx conceptualizes that class-consciousness is a root of conflict and struggle in a society, which leads to progressive revolution. By class-consciousness, Marx and Engels are of a view that "life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life" (47). This idea gets its expression in Marx's own formulation in the 1859 'Preface':

The totality of [...] relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life.

(425)

Before Marx, scholars believed that their ideas, their cultural life, their legal systems, and their religions were the creations of human and divine reason, which should be regarded as the unquestioned guidance to human life. Marx reverses this formulation and argues that all mental (ideological) systems are the products of real social and economic existence. The material interests of the dominant social class determine how people see human existence, individual and collective. The legal systems are not the pure manifestations of human or divine reason but ultimately reflect the interests of the dominant class. Marx has described this view that depends upon the 'base'. The relation between dominant and subordinate class governs the

economic order of a particular phase of human history that determines the whole economic life of the society. The hardship in the society, for Marx and Engels, stems from the capitalism and materialistic account of history.

The most revolutionary and scientific theory, that Marx has propounded, is based on social, political and economic background which values art and literature in the way it has expressed the socio-economic life of a society. Marxist philosophy, the philosophy of proletariat, disproves bourgeois economic, political and social system. Marx further says that literature must have social, political and economic theme which leads human beings to the progressive path so as to advance the society. And literature must be interpreted in socio-economic context. In Marxist criticism social class and class relations have a central function. For Marx, the working class emerges from the advent of capitalism. It is the exploited class which tries to overthrow the oppressors. Marx and Engels interpreted events towards revolutionary outcome as "the reflex of proletarian struggle in the world of ideas" (Cohen 320).]

Although, Marx and Engels have not propounded any systematic theories in *The Communist Manifesto* concerning art and literature they have professed the relation between base and superstructure. Marxism claims that base affects the superstructure. If there is change in base, superstructure also automatically gets changed. He advocates that the change in socio-economic relations bring change in ideology, politics, religion, art and literature. Marx, by base, means the socio-economic relations whereas superstructure refers to the religion, politics, art, ideology, economics and social forces. The relation between base and superstructure is dialectical but the main line of force runs from the base to the superstructure. Marx regards 'ideology' as superstructure and the concurrent socio-economic system as the 'base'. Marx' and Engels's commonality is that each economic structure like feudalism,

capitalism, or socialism of society leads to its own type of social organization and production of its own literature, art, culture, and religion. So, in Marxist analysis, the fundamental characteristic of literature and art is determined by socio-economic factors.

Literature, from Marxist point of view is treated as the reflection of the socio-economic life. Marxist critics argue that the origin, development, success or failure of a literary work should be judged on the basis of its relation to socio-economic life of the contemporary society. So, for Marxists, literature is an expression of socio-economic life and they judge it on the basis of how far it has fulfilled this function. In this regard, Trotsky agrees, "Art is always a social servant and historically utilitarian. The poet can find material for his art only in his social environment and transmits the new impulses of life through his own artistic consciousness" (Adams 794).

The fundamental distinction between Marxist criticism and non-Marxist criticism is that Marxist criticism examines how far a literary work embodies the ability in altering human existence and leads it in the path of progress, prosperity and emancipation, whereas other emphasizes on interpretive function and examines whether a work is successful in interpreting life and world appropriately. Marxism aims at revolutionizing the whole socio-economic life establishing a new system of politics governed by the proletariat. The theory strongly insists that a work of art should reflect the class relation in favour of working class people. It demands the authors to produce reality as objectively as possible with special care to class divisions especially, the exploitation of the lower class by the upper class. So, Marxist criticism tends to explore the inner causes instead of rendering outward superficial appearance of reality. Marxism tends to be critical of the movement of "art for art's sake". It rejects the minute subjective portrayal of the world of modern trend of

writing. For Marxists, literature should be fitful for the betterment of society.

Disproving the earlier concept of art and literature, it focuses on economic, social and political implication. Marxists claim that the division of labour has dismantled an earlier phase of human history in which artistic and spiritual life was inseparable from the progress of material existence. The separation of mental and manual work has destroyed the unity of spiritual and material activities. As a result, the masses were forced to produce commodities without willingness, freedom and joy of art and literature.

Summing up, Marxism is a critical category, which mainly questions the prevailing mainstream socio-economic structure of capitalism and it tries to liberate the under-privileged people in a society. Marxism shows the necessity of revolutionary socio-economic principle in which the marginal people can get equal space as possessed by the mainstream. It advocates against the elite economic structure, which subjugates the working class people. In a single sentence its aim is to negate the principle of capitalism, which counts profit by neglecting the workers' labour. So, Marxism, we can say, tries to destabilize the capitalist economic infrastructure to establish another infrastructure that unsatisfies the need of under-privileged group of people.

2.1 Class Struggle and Exploitation

Karl Marx, in *The Communist Manifesto*, has written, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (qtd. in Lohani 21). Marx's remarks that history is not a universal fact smooth hierarchy of human beings identity rather it is the counterproduct of two different and contrasting classes existed in every society. In the earlier epochs of history we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various social ranks. In ancient time there were patricians,

knights, plebeians and slaves. In the Middle Ages, there existed feudal lords; vassals; guild-masters; journeyman; apprentices and serfs. In almost all of these classes, there remained both mainstream and subordinate gradations. The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has again established new classes, new condition of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old one.

His accurate observation of economic society ended with the conclusion that it has split into two hostile camps with ongoing class-struggle between the bourgeois (the capitalists, property owners, oppressors, haves) and the proletariat (the oppressed, laborers, with no property) who only work for other that never ends. They are always struggling one trying to overcome another. The nature of hitherto existing history is progressive in that all the things that exist in society are inevitably in flux. And viewed society through materialistic insight that helps develop the whole ideology of the society.

The collapse of the feudal society gave rise to the bourgeois which even turns to be a more inhumanistic character that puts an end to the family relation between man and man to his natural superiors" and converted the human ties into the callous "Cash payment." Every individual self is to engage in fulfilling his/her self-interest. Marx, further professes as:

It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom - Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation. (22)

Each individual, then, is separated from family ties, exchange value takes the place of personal value, the establishment of give and take relation further leads to the loss of all ecstasies of human relation and ideal enthusiasm. And sentimentalisms are converted into bitter egotistical and selfish calculation. The very bourgeois system of social stratum is led by exploitation of all the professionals like physician, lawyer, priest, poet, scientist and all other people of different occupation have been made to "wage laborers". The bound of an individual in his/her family relation has certainly been changed into merely money relation, "The bourgeoisie has torn away the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a more money relation" (23). Lives then became like a system because of the competition of earning more and more money from the ruling class by exploiting the lower class. Those who possessed a great amount of money is privileged and so there remained no love relation which itself proved to be the obstacle in successful life.

The bourgeoisie, itself, historically, has played a most revolutionary part. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant modern industry and the place of the industrial middle-class by industrial millionaires, the leaders of whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois. For the existence, the bourgeois has revolutionized the instruments of production, the relations of production and the whole relations of society. The increasement of the capital and discovery of gigantic machines further activated the laborers tremendously. The industrial revolution is marked by its enormous amount of production and the enlargement and establishment of the world market, which required more and more products. "Modern industry has established the world market, [. . .]. This development has in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; [. . .], increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages (22). The newly establishment of gigantic

industries displaced immediately all the old fashioned and small industries and products. As a result it has exploited the world-market and has given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. Marx further argues it as “The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered stage of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has anglomerated population, centralized means of production and has concentrated property in a few hand”, (24).

The economic society of modern time is in the grip of the bourgeois that has been a medium of exploitation. The category of proletarian class that Marx has defined as a class of laborers or working class or struggling class that is extremely deprived from all the profits of their own hard labor. Even they are kept away from the products they are to produce. But, as the bourgeoisie develop, the proletarians do in the same proportion. In Marx's words the proletariat is "a class of laborers who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital" (25). These workers are compelled to sell themselves for piecemeal. They are regarded as a commodity like other articles of commerce, and consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Modern industry has converted the little workshops of the patriarchal master into the great factory of industrial capitalist. Moreover, Marks has expanded this idea as: "Masses of laborers, crowded into factories, are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants" (26). The workers are not only treated as slaves of the bourgeoisie class and of the bourgeoisie state but they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeoisie manufacturer himself. This despotism is hateful, petty and embittering.

Furthermore, a laborer becomes an appendage of the machine for he loses individual character as he is machinized. The laborer's wages are strictly paid and even delayed too so that he/she will come tomorrow for work. His payment is almost entirely decreased, though his labor is increased in proportion, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his daily maintenance. Marx continues as:

[. . .] In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of the use of machinery and division of labor increase, in the same proportion the burden of toil increase, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work enacted in a given, by increase of the work enacted in a given time, or by increased speed of the machinery, etc". (26)

The laborers, so, are to survive within a very narrow financial support. As they receive the very lowly wages in cash, there are other ready to capture even it from them. In the words of Marx, "no sooner than the exploitation of the laborer by the manufacturer, so far at an end, that he receives his wages in cash, then he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc," (26).

Within the very much harsh economic conditions, the laborers dwell in the bourgeois system with the imbalance of their wages and expenditure. Their lives run always in loan in advance. Because they expend the whole of their salary of each month before it ends. The small and middle class people are unable to compete with the great capitalists; so, the laborers, in the bourgeoisie economic society, are alienated from both of the other laborers and of their own work.

2.2 American Dream and Its Failure

In general sense a dream is regarded as a fantasy. The motivating forces of fantasies are wishes and every single fantasy is a fulfillment of wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality. For Freud it is psychological outcome of unfulfilled desires and wishes. But American Dream differs from Freudian definition of dream. American Dream is a dream of wealth, freedom and pleasure, a Puritan legacy shaped in American people's mind. It is Puritan because American Dream deeply concentrates on searching for a successful life. But it enhances capitalism in the sense that the success lies in the possession of money.

The term, American Dream, is derived by a historian James Truslow Adams in 1931, based on the principles and idealism of equality, determination and freedom. In this regard Jim Cullen points out in his *American Dream* that "The term (American Dream) seems like the most lofty as well as the most immediate components of an American identity a birth right for more meaningful and compelling than terms like "democracy", "constitution" or even "The United States" (5). American Dream, then, is the dream of the European immigrants' after they left their homeland because of the oppression in politics and religion and set out to America for a new and better life with enough accumulation of wealth continuously. Their aim was to work hard, and to earn more money itinerantly, and to live a life of heaven. When those immigrants entered America they were preoccupied with the pursuit of new life, a new type of history, which differed from the European, and with the new dimension of thought.

It was Columbus, who, from Europe, found American as a New Land. Around 1608 A.D., two hundred years later after the exploration of America, nine fleets of vessels arrived at Virginia from England. They were Puritan people who started searching for an appropriate place to be settled. The puritan immigrants were the

travelers who were suppressed politically and religiously by the government in Europe and were compelled to leave their homeland. As they arrived, they thought America as virgin land preserved by God for them. The puritans thought they were the first creation of God in heavenly land and began to weave dreams for the prosperous future in the New Found Land, America. So, the dream began in puritan scriptures after the discovery of America and it inspired the new Englanders to dream for a perfect land where everything would exist in a perfect harmony. But America was not an uninhabited land before the European immigrants' entrance as there was already the settlement of Red Indians. The Red Indians welcomed the immigrants as they believed in brotherhood and were accustomed to living in harmony and peace with each other. They (the Red Indians and other native Americans) thought of mutual co-operative relationship to develop with the new comers regarding them as their own brothers and sisters.

With the dream of imagination and hope, the puritans strived to establish a new order, a new law, a new system, a new custom, a new history, etc. in the American society. In the words of Frederic Carpenter, in his *American Literature and the Dream*, it is 'the dream of a better, richer and happier life for all our citizens of every rank which is the greatest contribution we have as yet made to the thought and welfare of the world' (15). They sought to change the new land into the land of honey, blessed by God. That is why, America seemed to become their dreamland where they hoped to set themselves free from the European Chaos. America, for them, became the field of new experiment and search for new relations to others. The newcomers proceeded with a belief that through hard work one could achieve the desired fruit. The major motto of the puritan's journey is to imagine a better, richer and prosperous life into the dreamland.

American Dream as a unique creation became one of the most important features of the American identity. Jim Cullen, in his *The American Dream*, argues it as:

Over the course of human history, peoples have used any number of means to identify themselves: blood, religion, language, geography, a shared history, or some combination of these . . . Yet the United States was essentially a creation of the collective imagination-inspired by the existence of a purportedly New World, realized in a Revolution that began with an explicitly articulated Declaration and consolidated in the writing of durable constitution. (6)

Like the Jews who thought to be the chosen people of God, messengers of God, and inheritors of God, the puritans too regarded themselves as were the Jews. The puritans found themselves to begin a new civilization in heavenly land of America. When the puritans started to migrate from different parts of Europe to America, they were replete with the plan of practicing the puritan values in the New Found Land freely and decided to pursuit the norms of civilization. The European chaos was the main driving force for their migration. Unfortunately, the puritans' expectation gradually seemed to be failure. The first nightmarish seed was sown within the concept of the American Dream when the new settlers forcefully began to capture the native Americans' land as being the most sacred to their cultural and religious norms, values, and customs. Moreover, the puritans had to face British dominance, which was unbearable. So the puritans struggled a lot in their attempts to free themselves from the British rulers. America was declared as an independent nation in 1776 as "The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America," the American Dream is articulated explicitly as, "We hold these truths to be

self-evident, that, all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" (Lohani 13).

American Dream, so, constituted on the three fundamental principles. The first is a belief in continuous progress towards a perfect society and personal success. The second, the idea of melting pot that in American people of various nationalities, religious beliefs and ethnic origins are changed into something new and specifically American. And the third, the belief in the manifest destiny that America had been chosen by God to free the rest of the world from despotism and darkness, etc.

America, for everybody, became a symbol of equality of citizenship, school for the kids, and or way opened for the kids' advancement to better work and higher social position. The dream was one of equality, of opportunity, of privilege and widely distributed property, a dream of a land where man did not argue that the color of a man's skin determined the content of his/her character. It is the dream of country where every man would respect the dignity and worth of human personality and man would dare to live together as brothers and sisters, that was the American Dream. After the completion of such a dream, American would emerge from the bleak and desolated midnight of man's inhumanity against man into the bright and glowing day breaks of freedom and justice for all of God's children. Similarly, in Declaration of Independence, Jefferson obviously remarks the function of the government as:

That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles and

organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. (Lohani 13)

Furthermore, the constitution of United States consolidated the concept of dream. It states that "We therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress, assembled appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intention" (qtd. in Urofsky 27).

Though the puritan migrants attempted to achieve success in their real life, the New Found Land was extremely difficult to deal with and they began to realize it was not like a paradise they thought of. And it proved to be a place of many trials and tribulations for the puritans. Even, there began a kind of hostility between the Red Indians and the immigrants due to the suppression imposed upon the former and their high spirits also were shadowed because they were compelled and forced to live under puritans' order and control. The marginalization, oppression and suppression of the poor and blacks resulted into the naster gap between whites and blacks, poor and rich as they tortured and exploited. On an ideological level, the realization of American Dream was demanded for "all men", but on personal level many accepted the deprivation of rights for the blacks, poor and other ethnic groups. Martin Luther King J.R's speech before two hundred thousands civil rights marchers in 1963 revived the afro-proclaimed dream; "I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American Dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal" (qtd in Miller 157).

In the long run of its history, the American Dream did not reach its culminating point of success though, to some extent, it is fulfilled. But the itinerant progression of new scientific discoveries and new technology with the advancement

of computer software by Bill Gates may be symbolic to the fulfillment of American Dream in itself. America, now, has progressed all the aspects of human needs through a new technological development like economy, science, education, etc. But within such panorama of development, there still a great majority of American who are deprived of an equal opportunity, prosperity of life and freedom regarding them as blacks poor and from other ethnic groups, etc.

America has now become a scarecrow for rest of the states of the world with its industrial capitalism, the concept of racial discrimination, the thought of othering other, the unchallenged military forces by land and air, the American presence and dominance as Big Brother, etc. are proved to be the disturbance of the so-called American Dream. So, what America had declared to fulfill became failure in its path by itself. Jim Cullen in his *American Dream* points out as:

Race relations wasn't the only area of American life where such a redefinition was taking place. The acceleration of industrial capitalism in the late 19th century, combined with the growing application of the Darwinian theory of "the survival of the fittest" to human affairs, popularized a notion of freedom as the right of the individual entrepreneur, to make much money as he could without interference that would drag down the progress of the human race as a whole. (107)

The more America is civilized and progressed, the more it has increased crime, enmity and racial violence over small countries and even in itself. It has left the way that humanity has been up to now. And it has turned into an unfertile desert where all the declared dreams, ideals, hopes etc. remain unfulfilled.

One example of paradigmatic text, which shows the failure of American Dream is Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, depicting the fate of the ambitious Joad family in midst of capitalist structure of American society.

Because of the high ambition attached in American Dream most of the people who occupy it are failure. American Dream leads people to expect more than the effort done by them. It can satisfy the need of some people but not of all. When the poor people start copying the wealthiest people's successful life they become the victim of the same dream, which they shape in their mind. Karl Marx's idea of social inequality appropriately matches this case because the poor were poor are poor, and will be poor because in capitalist structure of society few people get advantage whereas others are marginalized. In the case of poor people the same dream engenders the destruction of their life. So, American Dream, to some extent enriches some people, cannot equally satisfy the desire of total people. It is a dream, which structures a social hierarchy in which most of the people are trodden and few people are relevated. Since American Dream is descended from same distinguished Puritan people, it is not inclusive and favorable for the common people.

The Joad family entered California in pursuit of new life, new history and new happiness. They believed that through hard work, they could achieve the desired fruit. The central focus in their initiation of journey into the dreamland of California was the search of glorious future. In this sense, California became their dreamland. The Joads had visualized a Utopian country which was their American Dream. But the dream to create a perfect community in the "promised land" wasn't that easy. California was beautiful but "wild" because it was under the clutch of capitalists. On the first arrival at California, they were mocked, shamed and starved by the inhabitants of California. Californians were eager to use them for gain, to demand the

greatest work for the least pay, knowing the hungry, poor and dispossessed could not refuse. The Californians never offered them permanence and home. The Joads were as isolated from this place as from their own land far behind. They were unable to survive in Oklahoma and unwanted in California. If they settled for a moment, they were soon driven off by hunger or by pick handles. Despite the efforts, the family in California couldn't achieve success in reality. Gradually, the Joads saw that California was not a paradise but it proved to be a place for many trials and tribulations. The hostility between the Californians and the migrants/the Joads widened further because of the suppression and exploitation that was imposed upon the migrants/ the Joads. So, the dream of Joad family shattered and they were left into destitute and unbearable condition. The condition was the product of the exploitation of Joads by the different capitalistic forces prevalent in the California society.

III. George and Lennie: Representatives of American Dream

Of Mice and Men presents two central characters, George and Lennie, who embody a dream of prosperous life and a continuous progress towards personal success. It is a dream that culminates to seek freedom and pursuit of happiness by getting rid of poverty. They do have the belief that success is attainable if hard working is paid. So, they are obsessed with a dream of earning more money to correlate their desire. The dream, which George and Lennie have embodied, is the American Dream since it initiates to earn more and more money in search of an edenic life in which the dreamer can occupy the highest economic and social rank. So, George and Lennie are representatives of American Dream.

George and Lennie, the two poor people, inspired by the commonest dream of American, start making a plan of earning more money because Weed, where they have spent half of their lives in misery, is "the place was lifeless" (2). They want prosperous living because they have already been victim of poverty and unable to maintain their livelihood. They "both were dressed in denim trousers and in denim coats with brass buttons" (2). The descriptive line clearly shows the poor economic condition of the two American people, George and Lennie. Despite their worsen social and economic condition, George and Lennie see their prospective successful life and imagine a place from where they can fulfill their dream of being wealthy. Obsessed with the dream of accumulating property, George and Lennie set off for the exploration of an edenic land, Salinas Valley. With the hope of getting heated works of three dollars to a day by bucking barley during harvest season and collecting a great amount of money and buying a couple of acres of land and house with garden for better, richer and prosperous future life, they set their journey to Salinas Valley.

The motto of their initiation of journey is to earn more and more money by hard work and to buy their own farm and house where they will pet various livestock like rabbits, cows, pigs etc. for better, richer and prosperous life for the time to come. In the midst of hopelessness and difficulty, they see beauty and prosperity. It has been clearly demonstrated when George dreams of "we're gonna get the jack together and we're gonna have a little house and a couple of acres an' a cow and some pigs and —an' live off the fatta the lan" (13). It is George's obsession with matter because the two itinerant Anglo American migrants, George and Lennie, are in search of an easy life in the ranch. A paradise for the two men who want to be masters of their own lives, the farm represents, the possibility of freedom, self-reliance, and secure of future life.

George is strongly obsessed with the dream of land and home where he can consume his freedom. So, George persuades Lennie to follow his plan. Together with the hard work in the Salinas Valley, George's dream of owing own farm and home and keeping livestock increases. George hypothesizes their bright future and asserts "tomorrow we're gonna go to work. I seen thrashin' machines on the way down "(7). This line demonstrates George's auspicious vision of future by working in the ranch. The Salinas Valley, Soledad, in California for George and Lennie, is a utopian world which may enrich their lives and elevate their social and economic condition. Enchanted with future success, George advises Lennie to "run us out, hell" and he further says "We run. They were looking for us, but they didn't catch us" (6). The statement says more than what it actually is. The dreamers, George and Lennie, try to escape the place where they have suffered a lot. The word 'they' symbolically suggests the common people of Weed who have been victimized because of unproductivity and sterility of the land. So, it is their desire to separate themselves with the people of

Weed. It also connotes the dreamers' desire of inhabiting in a prosperous and fertile land where they can initiate their dream. So, George and Lennie are desirous to reject their homeland in search of a small heaven, an edenic place, which can fulfill their desire.

After George convinces Lennie to follow the plan of earning more money, their journey initiates from Weed to Salinas Valley. George talks more about their destination and instructs Lennie "You can remember this place, can't you? The ranch is about a quarter mile up that way. Just follow the river" (14). Symbolically, the river leads them towards their destination. They want to follow the river because their journey is to get easy way of life similarly the water seeks its easy way to get its destination. They become optimistic about their prosperous lives in the course of their journey. They forget their terrible past and make a plan for the betterment of future "when we get the couple acres I can let you tend the rabbits all right" (14). George says so, because Lennie likes the delicate and tender things in his life. Lennie's obsession with such delicate things resembles to American people's desire of getting prosperity with their best effort. It means American people do not get back to do anything even though it needs hard labor to accomplish their target. But their dream should end in success and prosperity.

As they approach the bunk house in Salinas Valley, George and Lennie decide to stay there. They become infatuated by the bunk house because it is a 'Promised Land' for them to furnish their dream. The bunk house stands for their goal of attaining employment. Its description is narrated as:

. . . shelves were loaded with little articles, soap and talcum powder, razors and those western magazines ranch men love to read and scoff at and secretly believe. And there were medicines on the shelves, and

little vials, combs; and from nails on the box sides, a few neckties.

Near one wall there was black cast-iron stove, its stove pipe going straight up through the ceiling. In the middle of the room stood a big square table littered with playing cards and around it were grouped boxes for the players to sit on. (16)

The bunk house represents the dreamers' enquiry of a perfect and epitomic place which may enable the people, the American Dreamers, to accomplish their goal of maintaining their life standard. The bunk house is well facilitated which entralls George and Lennie. The newspaper, in the bunk house is a medium of the wealthiest persons like the boss of the bunk house to extend their reputation. So, they try to imitate the boss and make themselves enthusiastic to occupy a place similarly the boss has done.

With the hope of earning more money they start working in the ranch. They do have a hope which may or may not lead them to attain prosperity. But their activity is determined by a dream of being owner of their own farmland, a place where they can establish their own rule and system after accumulating money from their hard labour in the ranch. Whatever they effort in the ranch is not for present but for the secure future. As they start working, George asserts "I hoped we was gonna get a little stake together- may be a hundred dollars" (28). With that money George plans "we'll have a big vegetable patch and a rabbit hutch and chickens. And, when it rains in the winter, we'll just say the hell with goin' to work, and we'll build up a fire in the stove and set around it an listen to the rain comin' down on the roof". (14). This ambitious plan for future clearly demonstrates a dreamer's desire of snatching a thing that has not been explored by common people. It also separates the dreamer from the common people who toil just as Darwin's principle of getting adoptability.

Meanwhile, George dreams of more and more about the plan that he has shaped in his mind. The steeple of his desire goes to high intensity when an image of "a girl was standing there looking in. She had full, rouged lips and wide-shaped eyes, heavily made up. Her finger nails were red. Her hair hung in little rolled clusters, like sausages" (29). It is not only Georges' ambition of accumulating riches but also his desire of establishing a household life with a beautiful wife. Money, beauty and pleasure are the commonest and ultimate goal of Americans who have occupied American Dream.

Similarly, George has represented himself as a perfect representative of American Dream by hypothesizing the possession of money, beauty and pleasure. It frequently hunts his mind so that he devotes himself to work in the ranch.

With the hope of getting success, George and Lennie try to change the inaccessible into accessible by their toil. They wander in the world where sun is lit for them in water and forget their world of brick and stone. Despite, they work to attain the thing of their desire and continuously sweat in the ranch. George convinces Lennie, "It ain't enough land so we'd have to work too hard" (55). Meanwhile, the land cannot correspond to their desire so that George advises Lennie, "If we can get jus' a few dollars in the poke we'll shove off and go up the American River and pan gold. We can make may be a couple of dollars a day there, and we might hit pocket" (31). It shows that George and Lennie are possessing unquenchable thirst of accomplishing their goal. Wherever they wander to accumulate the riches they become affected by the socio-economic structure of contemporary American society which tantalizes them to achieve their goal that is far from their reach. It is because capitalism is the ingrained principle in the then American society.

Summing up, George and Lennie are two Americans, having a grateful desire of accumulating the riches, even though, they could afford or not, they leave no stone unturned in their course to attain it. But, the outcome of their labor is yet to be known. I'll be discussing their fiasco of material desire in the next sub chapter.

Failure of George and Lennie

Even though, George and Lennie try their best to consolidate their dream of prosperous life, it turns into a mirage because capitalism is ingrained in American socio-economic structure. The more they sweat to earn riches to create a small heaven to be settled luxuriously, the more they are exploited. Because the poor are tantalized by the possibility of secure future in capitalism. The dreamers, George and Lennie, fall in the labyrinth of capitalism and become failure to shape their dream of occupying the highest economic and social rank. It is because the dreamers have become unable to presuppose the response to the poor like them that would be given by capitalism. So, their material obsession in the midst of capitalism ends into a complete failure.

The novel unfolds with a vivid description of the two migrant itinerant Anglo American farmhands, George and Lennie, from North California to Salinas Valley, Soledad, South California as they are homeless and landless. Despite, they have a hope that one day they will be owner of their own home and land. To accomplish their dream, they wander into different parts of American land. When they find a bunk house in Salinas Valley their dream of accumulating riches culminates. But, their dream of accumulating riches by toiling in the ranch initiates in the vexed issue as they approach the boss in the ranch who comments "Where the hell's them new men?" (18). The statement maintains an incorrigible relationship between the poor, who have cultivated a dream of idyllic world, and their owner who frequently try to excel their

position by decoying the lower class people. So, the initiation of their chore boomerangs from the beginning to the end of their dream. It is because the contemporary society of America was looming towards capitalist orientation. Now, George and Lennie are going to be enrolled in the system of capitalism because, "The[ir] names was entered in the book" (20), and he closes the book. The book, which is opened by the boss to register their name explicitly depicts itself as an instrument of capitalism to ameliorate its principle. So, the boss is in hurry to benefit his business after registering their name and he orders George and Lennie, "Go on out with the grain teams after dinner. They're pickin' up barley at the threshin' machine. Go out with Slim's team" (21). It shows the burgeoning state of the owner's progress instead of George and Lennie who are hell-bent to accomplish their goal. Gradually, the dream of George and Lennie initiates towards failure. The more they work in the bunk house the more they are helpless to make it relevant according to their desire. It is because their work is counted in the bunk house instead of their earning. The boss, the representative of capitalism, is ignorant to reconcile the labor of the worker and their wages given to them. Instead of succeeding their dream of earning more money to settle a happy life, George and Lennie face a predicament of exploitation impinged by capitalism.

The dreamers, George and Lennie despite the inhuman treatment of the boss continue their work with the hope of future studded with prosperity. George, with hope, convinces Lennie to work without being desperate and argues, "Don't never speak to him. If he comes in here you move clear to the other side of the room. But, don't leave the work then we'll collect more stake" (27). In the midst of depression and difficulty also George sees his hope going to be succeeded. Instantly, his hope mingles with depression when the boss mercilessly comments on the workers. "Yo'

feeling does not concern our business" (28). It is not only the boss' personal opinion describing the importance of his business but also a shared opinion prevalent in capitalist milieu. The undercurrent attitude of the boss does not allow the workers, George and Lennie, to maintain their dream permanently because they are regarded as working hands. So, their hope of creating a prosperous world where they can consume pleasure and happiness after their toil changes into a gradual failure. Along with their dream the cruelty of capitalism foregrounds its scope. So the bunk house, now appears indifferent towards them. The boss' pedantic appearance makes George and Lennie unable to hold their dream as they had done in their entrance in the bunk house. They find a hierarchy of power centralized inside the bunk house owned by the boss, which has become a governing principle to the workers. So, George is dispirited, and he bewares Lennie "Don't make mistake about that. He's boss's son. Look, Lennie. You try to keep away from him" (27). It not only shows the distance between the owner and the workers but also justifies the cruelty of capitalism which exploits the workers. The dream of the workers, George and Lennie, has its limitation within them which can not be empirical reality since it cannot get shaped.

Similarly, most of the migrant workers including George and Lennie do their best in the ranch to succeed their dream. But the ranch owner only takes advantage of them. Their hope of prosperous life is gradually affected as they do not earn more as has been expected while entering the bunk house. Anonymous old man having multitude of dream is also treated in the same manner as George and Lennie been treated. Steinbeck narrates it as "The old man moved toward the door and his ancient dog lifted his head and peered about and then got painfully to his feet to follow" (28). The dog symbolically refers to the new comer in the bunk house who has been treated always in the acidulous manner from the beginning. And the old man is compelled to

show the new comer a way of performing his duty. It also suggests that the old man has become old performing the same duty without renewal of his dream. Also, it shows that a worker must stay working for his owner throughout this life. And, his dream ends in disillusionment than in reality.

In capitalism human labour is replaced by machinery which belongs to the owner. George and Lennie belong to the proletariat group of people who own no property but only a dream to accumulate it. They own only their labour not the products that they have produced. They are the people in capitalist society who are called haves not. By and by George becomes conscious about their position in society and accepts:

Guys like us, that work on ranches are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place. They come to a ranch an' work up a stake . . . and the first thing you know they're poundin' their tail on some other ranch. They ain't got nothing to look ahead to (13)

It is George's realization that the people like him are always used in capitalism to support its mode of production but they always remain emptyhand.

Now, George and Lennie gradually become enslaved of their own dream which has engendered them to be exploited. Their dream of accumulating riches is fragmented since the owner of the bunk house compels them to work in low wages. Even, they are treated in animal like manner which George expresses as "I'm scared. I'm gonna tangle with that bastard myself. I hate his guts" (35). The atmosphere of the bunk house is strange for them because the mechanism of capitalism pervades in every instance. Their imagination of prosperous life weakens in every step. The house where they perform their labor is like a slaughterhouse for them because it

absorbs their sweat and blood. In this process the possession of the dream shifts only into the motto of earning a living. Now, George introspects into imaginary past and dreams of "If I was bright, if I was even a little bit smart, I'd have my own my little place, an I'd be bringin' in my own crops, 'stead of doin' all the work and not getting what comes up outta the ground" (37). George's disillusionment clearly demonstrates his acceptance of economic failure at present so that he imagines a prosperous past, but without success. It also implies that George's mind is heavily affected by the economic depression he has faced in the bunk house.

Most of the workers in the bunk house toil hard to attain their dream of prosperous life. In the midst of exploitation they get no relief to shape their dream. Having the same situation of George and Lennie, another worker, Crooks, realizes that their work makes the owner richer and themselves poorer. He mentions:

You guys is just kiddin' yourself, you'll talk about it a hell of a lot, but you won't get no land. You'll be a swamper here till they take you out in a box. Hell, I seen too many guys. Lennie here'll quit an' be on the road in two, three weeks. Seems like ever' guys got land in his head (72).

It shows how the labourers are detached from the share of profit they produced. It implicitly clarifies that the workers, like Candy, are exploited by the profit oriented principle of capitalism which changes the dreams of the workers into an illusion.

The destination of their dream, the bunk house, where they devote themselves to consolidate their dream of prosperous life becomes a place of incrimination between workers and owners. Now, instead of dreaming, George reveals his angst towards the boss severely and expresses his disapproval which is narrated as "I ain't

mad at you. I'm mad at this here Curley bastard" (28). George's realization of exploitation upon them develops initiating in his mind which is the factual atmosphere in capitalism. Instead of elevating their dream of accumulating riches, George and Lennie have been enslaved by capitalism which promotes its principle of profit by exploiting them. They are defeated because Lennie surrenders on the alter of exploitation and desperately says "I don't like this place, George. This ain't no good place I wanna get outta here" (30). It is the climax of the poors' situation on the midst of capitalism. Capitalism counts how many quantities are produced by laborers than what their dreams are.

Related to exploitation, alienation of George and Lennie is another way of their failure. The workers, in the bunk house, are alienated to each other because the boss compels them to engage only in the work. They work only by compulsion but not by desire. So the bunk house has become enemy for them. The stink of the bunk house has replaced their auspicious dream. The atmosphere of the bunk house is narrated as "Stinks like hell too." (33). They are not only alienated from the skunk atmosphere of the bunk house but also from the production they have produced. Despite their dream of getting economic success, they are helpless and are estranged. The economic alienation can be felt when Candy desperately explains it to Crooks as "I never had none. I planted crops for damn near ever 'body in this state, but they wasn't my crops, and when I harvested 'em, it wasn't none of my harvest" (72). Candy's expression of sorrow demonstrates that even though the workers produce the means of production it is controlled by the owner giving the workers a minimal quantity of it. Marx's theory of alienation of the workers in capitalism is relevant in this case because the workers are economically alienated. When they are alienated, their dream of attaining riches and luxurious life gets blurred. Despite the

hopelessness, the workers in the bunk house create a utopian world where they can be the owner of their own land. But, the bunk house has not satisfied the desires of the laborers who arrive there with heartfelt desire. So Crooks is bereaved and laments "I seen guys nearly crazy with loneliness for land, but ever' time a whore house or a blackjack game took what it takes" (73). The alienation of the workers clearly shows their unfulfilled desire. It also shows that the bunk house is a whore house, symbolically, a place where the wealthy people entertain by sucking the blood of the workers. So, Crooks' argument consists the common alienation of the workers who have spent most of their lives working in the bunk house with the hope of fulfilling their dream.

Gradually, the workers become an empty vessel eventhough they work hard to achieve successful economic status. They try to decipher another 'Promised Land' where they can one day be owner of their farmland and house. It is because they are deceived by the bunk house of the ranch which they have thought to be their destination. So, they want to escape from there. The workers George, Lennie, Crooks and Candy make a plan to be in a new land, and Candy instantly inquires "you know where's a place like that?" (55). The question, aroused by Candy, manifests a collective desire of the workers who have disliked exploitation in the bunk house. Also, it shows the dreamers' search for an idyllic land which may rescue them. Bewildered by the bitter fact of economic failure in capitalism, George professes that the imaginary place of Candy is unattainable and assures him "you couldn't find it in hundred years" (56). Now, George has realized that in capitalism the workers, who have occupied a dream of promoting their life standard, are exploited. So, his answer to Candy's question implies the prevalent capitalist economic structure ingrained

everywhere. George is defeated because he, now, sees capitalist oriented economic structure which welcomes them to be exploited.

As they are alienated, George and Lennie try to escape from there to enrich their fortune. George, a strenuous dreamer, leaves Lennie to capture an appropriate time to obtain the thing that they have not been able to get in the bunk house. And, he departs from there to find another 'Promised Land,' 'American River'. It is his idea of getting heat profit by being into different places to accumulate more money. As he, leaves the bunk house, the boss' wife says "All the boys gone into town" (66). Along with George and Lennie's separation, their dream begins to be weaker and weaker. Now, symbolically, their dream splits because the two friends, George and Lennie, are at distance to each other. George's exploration of other land brings no effect in their dream because he engages himself in a whore house. It is because he has no option there to select the work he likes. Instead, he ruins himself by being involved in the whore house. The whore house, in reality, is a place to get entertainment for the privileged people who can afford in it. George spends the days in the whore house without progress. On the other hand, bewildered by George's absence in the bunk house, Lennie inquires it to Crooks. Lennie is answered as "An where's George now? In town in a whore house. That's where your money's going. I seen it happen too many times. I seen too many guys with land is their head. They never get a none under their hand" (72). But, George's exploration of the 'Promised Land,' the American River, becomes antagonist to him as the bunk house was before because he ruins his savings which he has funded from the beginning to initiate his dream. So, his dream of earning more money in the whore house ends into complete failure because of the mechanism of the whore house which welcomes the prosperous people by excluding the poor.

As George becomes failure in his project of accumulating the riches in the whore house, he again returns to the bunk house in Salinas valley. As George and Lennie's condition in the bunk house goes from bad to worse, their lives become harder and harder. The bunk house for George and Lennie becomes hostile, for it can not fulfill their desire. The bunk house dwellers are mocked, unrespected, unwelcomed and exploited. There is no security of life and liberty because, at any cost, the boss needs more profit by enslaving them. The ranch-workers, after working one month, earn no more money. The boss becomes more tyrannical towards the laborers and reveals his angst "Ya hands. I need yar work not yar feelin' an' not your dream. Hands, you continue your work for me" (76). Because of unamiable relationship between the ranch owner and the laborers, George and Lennie's dream gets no shape as they have expected. The representative of capitalist society, the boss, remains cruel to the workers. He prefers his economic progress to the workers' obsession with profit. The voice of dominant class in capitalism is the dominant voice and the voices of the ruled are neglected. Steinbeck presents this condition by commenting on the boss' authority as "his authority is so great that his word was taken on any subject, be it politics or love" (31). It is Steinbeck's realization that the downtrodden people are always inferiorized by the dominant voice of the capitalist like the boss who imposes his authority upon the poor like George and Lennie.

The proletariats, George and Lennie, always work hard for hope of their better future by neglecting the exploitation. But, the more they work the more they become impoverished, for they do not work only for themselves but for the sake of the boss, who without oil captures all the products leaving George and Lennie bare handed. So, the edenic hope of George and Lennie gets the same value destined by the common laborers who devote their life performing their duty. The bunk house gives no shelter,

rather it excludes the labors who cannot profit the boss' business. So, it is a place where the laborers, until they are used, perform their duty and leave it with empty hand. It is correctly professed by Curly as:

I have seen hundreds of men come by on the road an; on the ranches, with their bindles on their back an' that same damn thing in their heads. Hundreds of them. They come, an' they quit an' goon, an every damn one of 'em's got little piece of land in his head. An' never a God damn of them ever gets it just like heaven. Ever'ybody wants a little piece of lan'. I read plenty of books out here. Nobody' never gets to heaven, and nobody gets no land. It's jus' in their head. They are all the time talkin' about it, but it's jus' in their head. (70)

Curley's statements about the workers clearly demonstrates that he is habituated and acquainted with these under privileged people who enter and exit from his ranch. It also justifies that the dreamers and workers are nominal for the boss. As well as, his statements point out the dreamers' unstable social position neither belonging to the ranch nor to their previous homeland. So, George and Lennie have become pendulum because of the antagonistic attitude of the boss towards them. The boss' relation with workers is momentary. He pays least wages to the workers. So, the workers' dream of prosperity, success, amusement and luxurious life turns out to be a mirage.

George and Lennie's dream leads them to a road of flight for refugees from the dust and shrinking land to the dream land, California. For them, it appears as a transition between two worlds: the world of exploitation, oppression and the world of promise and freedom. It forms a bridge between the world of reality and the world of expectation, dream. They have to face many trials and tribulations. But all the sufferings, difficulties and miseries are bearable for them because they have a dream in Salinas valley: dream of job, good wages, better and comfortable life. But the

reality is bitter and unfavorable for them. Even they are punished brutally by the boss and his son, Curly, without fault. Steinbeck narrates it when Curley shows his scrappy behavior towards Lennie "Come on, big bastard. Get upon your feet. No big son-of-a-bitch is gonna laugh at me. I'll show ya who's yella"(59). Now their dreamland, the Salinas valley, in Soledad, becomes a utopian place of idyllic world. On the one hand they are disliked by the land owner and on the other hand they are beaten and threatened. They become dispirited and gradually lose their hope of successful life. Time and again they are mercilessly treated. Curley comments furiously "...slashed at Lennie with his left, and then smashed down his nose with a right. Lennie gave a cry of terror. Blood welled from his nose" (59). So, in this labyrinth their dream turns out to be futile because it has exploited them in every instance. The main cause of failure of their dream is they are the lower class people. In every society people like George and Lennie are suppressed because it is inevitably ingrained system and principle of the upper class.

George and Lennie, with this dream, complete their journey, but their 'Promised Lands' are not like the plenty that they have expected. Though they suffer all of the incredible hardship, they only exchange their bad life into worse one. They get no promised land flowing with honey and milk. The bucking barley in the ranch is overcrowded and working in the ranch is short and wages have been reduced to starvation level. They are beaten, scared and even seduced. In their protest they are killed, too. Constantly they are tortured by the land owners. They are treated not as human beings but persecuted and chased by the police. Even, they are accused of doing nothing wrong. It is the capitalism that encourages the laborers to murder each other. Their plights are consequence of imitation they have done of the capitalist. The workers are caught in the inexorable condition of capitalism. So, they move from one

misery to another gigantic misery at every place and time. They are respected nowhere. The boss' wife compares the workers with the machine and prefers machine to them. Her attitude is clearly seen in the line "Ok. I'll talk to you latter. I like machine" (76). So, she gives no respect for their labor which is an effort to establish an edenic and everlasting life, but is mainly aware of her social hierarchy.

In the novel, George and Lennie are not only displaced and impoverished but also ultimately face the problem of existence in capitalist socio-economic structure. Their dream gets no shape of its bud. When they cannot tolerate the subordination they resist the ranch owners. Their dream is completely destroyed when Lennie resists the boss by killing his wife. Now, they think no dream because they are fallen in a twig of bush which is made by the boss who is in higher echelons. Steinback narrates George and Lennie's conditions as "Now, George and Lennie have no place. They get no idea" (76). Steinback's comment on the poor condition of George and Lennie clearly shows that they have no place to fulfill their dream. It also suggests the end of their dream because they have no idea about their dream. As a results, Lennie is murdered by his own friend George to avoid the cruel death penalty that would be given to him by the boss' son, Curley. As Lennie's life ends in the bunkhouse, the atmosphere does not allow George to expect the same hope he has kept in his mind while entering the 'Promised Land', Salinas valley. Now, he continues his toil by being enslaved of capitalism. In this stage, George no longer thinks about the plan they had made in the beginning of their journey.

In this way George and Lennie, in *Of Mice and Men*, come to utter desolation because of exploitation and alienation. In the beginning of their journey, George and Lennie have a hope of finding an edenic place where they can be their own masters. As the novel proceeds, they become more and more impoverished and alienated. At

last, they are destituted, hopeless, and unable to maintain their dream. The prospective 'Promised Lands', either it is Salinas valley or 'American River', deceive them because capitalism is ingrained in these places. This is all caused by the exploitation they suffer under capitalism. So, they are alienated from their homeland, California, from their dream and even from each other. So, California is not the solution of their problems and hardships but it further adds their miseries. Thus, the two American dreamers, George and Lennie, have become failure to sustain the burden of American Dream. It is because they are exploited, alienated and estranged by capitalism.

IV. Conclusion

Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* represents two central characters, George and Lennie, obsessed with a dream of accumulating riches and occupying the highest economic and social echelon. They are representatives of American Dream because they do have a hope that success is attainable if hard working is paid. To correlate their dream, George and Lennie search for the "Promised Land" where they can fulfill their desire. So, they make 'California' a "Promised Land". Instead, their entrance in the ranch of California does not consolidate their dream, for they are exploited by capitalist economic system. In this way the motto of their journey, the search for better, richer and dignified life in the Californian valley, remains a failure and it proves to be a general mirage.

George and Lennie, the two dreamers, make a plan of earning more money because they want to be the masters of their own life, farm and house. They want it because they have already been victim of poverty to maintain their livelihood at Weed. Despite, their worsened social and economic condition, George and Lennie see their prospective successful life and imagine a place where they can fulfill their dream of being wealthy. With the hope of getting two to three dollars a day by bucking barley in the ranch during harvest season and collecting a great amount of money, to buy a couple acres of land and house with a garden for better richer and prosperous future life, they set their journey to Salinas valley. But the atmosphere of the bunk house in the ranch is deferent form they have expected. The bunk house is run by capitalist principle and system which gives less importance to workers like George and Lennie. So, from the beginning of their life in the 'Promised Land', Salinas valley in Soledad becomes miserable because their hope of getting three dollars a day remains a false hope.

The boss in the ranch becomes antagonist to the workers like George and Lennie because he is habituated to exploit the workers giving them low wage. The more George and Lennie work in the bunk house with the hope of better, richer and prosperous future life, the more they are exploited. Their dream, so, turns out to be a vexed issue since the mechanism of the bunk house is unfavorable for them. The boss mercilessly orders them to toil in the ranch. He is profit oriented so that he does not concern their feelings. The main principle of capitalism is embodied by the boss, for he regards the workers, George, and Lennie, as if they are hands who, with necessity, should perform their duty to profit him. Despite the inhuman trust of the boss towards them, George and Lennie, never leave their dream of their own land and farm where they can have an edenic life.

Similarly, most of the migrant laborers including George and Lennie do their best in the ranch to succeed their dream but the ranch owner only takes advantage over them. Their hope of prosperous life is gradually affected as they do not earn more money as they have expected after entering the bunk house. So, the workers are alienated, exploited and unrespected in the bunk house. Time and again the boss comments on them and frightens them. He also threatens them that they may be displaced from there if they don't obey his rules and system made by him. Their conditions in the bunk house worsen day by day. In the midst of difficulties, George pursues Lennie to work sincerely because he assures him that one day they will be able to accomplish their dream. Together they work but the response, in return, is harsh. They earn no money and their dream is dried up. Ultimately, George searches for a solution to avoid their poverty. Thus he imagines another 'Promised Land', American River which may rescue them from alienation and exploitation so that their dream will be fulfilled. Instead, the American River brings no hope to them. The

principle of capitalism is also ingrained there. Again, George is exploited there in the town lure he has expected to earn more money than in Salinas valley by bucking barley. Because of the exploitation in the American Rivers, George returns from there with empty hand. His wandering from Weed to Salinas and at last, to the American River brings no success in his life as he has expected in the beginning. So, all their dreams are shattered along with their failure of earning money.

Because of the existing capitalism, the dreams of lower class people like George and Lennie remains unfulfilled. Even if they try their best to collect a great amount of money to buy a couple of acres of land and house for better, richer, and prosperous future life, George and Lennie have become failure. It is because in capitalism the poor become poorer and the rich become richer.

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