

Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English Language and Literature



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Submitted by: LAKAS Marouane

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**Steinbeck's Realistic Portrayal of Working Class
People in *The Grapes of Wrath***

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Before the Jury:

Mrs. Dallila Bourahla President UKM Ouargla
Dr. Mohamed Seghir Halimi Supervisor UKM Ouargla
Mr. Djelloul Bourahla Examiner UKM Ouargla

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents, my family, and my friends.

To all my instructors who provided me with knowledge and guidance.

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List of Abbreviation

CATS : Caterpillar Tractor

JS :John Steinbeck

Abstract

This study attempt to investigate the style of John Steinbeck in *The Grapes of Wrath* he used a realistic style by depicting the story of the Okies and their journey to the west they escaped from the bad reality and the greed of capitalists who oblige them to leave their land and they seduce them that there are a lot of work opportunities in California, Steinbeck through his novels portray how the journey of Joads and the other immigrants in a interesting way ; he makes the reader live with the progress of the events in the novel and interact with the carachters development throughout the story .

الملخص:

هذه الدراسة تهدف إلى إظهار الأسلوب الواقعي في رواية عناقيد الغضب للكاتب الأمريكي جون شتينيوك الرواية تسرد الأحداث و تحكي عن قصة عائلة اسمها جود و معاناتهم مع المهاجرين الآخرين الذين كانوا يقطنون في أوكلاهوما لكن الكساد الاقتصادي والكوارث الطبيعية غيرت مجرى حياتهم مما أدى إلى طردهم من أراضيهم و حاولوا البحث عن عمل خارج الولاية قاصدين كاليفورنيا لكن الأمور كانت تزداد حبكة وتعقيد كل يوم .

Keywords:

Okies, Grapes of Wrath, Dust Bowl, Great Depression

General Introduction

General introduction

1. INTRODUCTION

The literature published during the 19th century demonstrates that most of the stories and literary works written on that period deeply reflect the life of people in that time. In this period some economic and natural factors have affected negatively the citizens of America and especially land workers, of course these factors contributed to the enrichment of literature.

Most authors sought through their themes to deal with the American dream, and try to live better and fight against the cruel reality in a while people were searching to figure out what they should do to live better. Many authors appeared and they tried to give the reader right and the accurate depiction of people conditions that time.

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck was one of those works which appeared in 1939. The author offers a sharp criticism of American society and the contradiction between the ideas in the American society, such as justice, equality and equal opportunities while the sad reality is that it is simple for a family to suffer in order to reach the minimum livelihood; “*I've done my damndest to rip a reader's nerves to rags, I don't want him satisfied.*” (J.S to his editor)The novel was very powerful and realistic. It is considered one of the classics of American literature through the story Steinbeck gives for the reader creative model in which he inspired his characters, plot, and the narrative elements from the American economic, social and cultural reality.

1.1 Background of the study

John Steinbeck’s novels including *The Grapes of Wrath* have been the centre of interest for many writers. It highlights the painful socio-economic conditions that the Joads family must experience. Barry Maine states that the objective of the *Grapes of Wrath* is to enlarge the dimension of fiction by exposing a large picture of American Society. There was an

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anthropological analysis of *The Grapes of Wrath* by Brian, E Rails back he emphasizes that the novel echoes Darwin's theory of evolution, according to him, "in no other book is Steinbeck's dramatization of Darwin's theory more clear; the novel resonates with the naturalist's ideas" (p.

50 ,2005) the novel includes the essential elements of evolution, the struggle for survival, existence , and the natural selection of determinism , in addition to the psychological perspectives on the novel , Malcom Coweley 2005 has suggested a sociological reading .his study concentrates on John Steinbeck Sympathy with the immigrants and their endeavour to unite themselves against the ' economic oppressors .According to him , *The Grapes of Wrath* classified among the angry American literature.

1.2 The Research Problem

In my research paper I want to find the link that Steinbeck used it to portray the people in his work *The Grapes of Wrath* in a good way since the story focused in the class people so the Marxism theory took a place in the work that's what helped the author to succeed in his realistic story. Therefore, my research problem is how to reveal the link between the Marxism and realism for better depiction for people and their life conditions in *The Grapes of Wrath*.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to analyze the work of Steinbeck *The Grapes of Wrath* on the light of Marxism and Realism, so applying these two to find the relation between them in the novel. Then, we aim at revealing the impact that this novel had on the history of America. The use of the Marxist and realistic way in Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* paves way to the reading of literature not only from a literary point of view but from both social and psychological point of view as well.

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Having dealt with the callousness of man in a society torn by rebellion, the author shows the common sense of humanity which does not exclude the reader, whosoever, regardless of his belonging or ideology. The problem of exploitation of man to man is a common (universal) issue which raises human sensibility and sympathy, as it changes man's perception of himself and of the other. It helps developing common ground about the expected man's self despite the actual divergent perception of the self. All HUMAN BEINGS are supposed to react emotionally to the situation because; they are all concerned with question of self identification with the other selves regardless of the behaviours, attitudes, geographical distribution and most importantly social class.

1.4 The Research Questions

I've suggested some questions to conduct my study which were:

- In which sense is Steinbeck's novel read as both sociological and psychological novel?
- How does the author show the individual's grievances in the story?
- In what way the author's characters are seen to embody the brunt of both social and psychological upheavals?

1.5 Hypotheses

To answer the aforementioned questions, the following hypotheses are formulated: Steinbeck uses some daily life aspects and depict reality from characters' life experiences. Characters are a state of being oppressed when they are exploited by the upper class. The role of the Class people shown through the different events of novel help the author to portray society well.

General introduction

1.6 Motivation

I find John Steinbeck's novel a significant event in the American national history. Capturing the plight of many Americans whose lives had been crushed by the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression, make me sympathize with the poor worker people, that's what grab my attention to the style of Steinbeck, he alerted the nation's intellectual capacity and consideration. *The Grapes of Wrath* evokes quintessentially American themes of hard work, self-determination, and reasoned dissent.

1.7 Literature Review

American Literature witnessed the birth and spread of movements such as realism, naturalism and theories such as Marxism. Some of the movements were a continuation to each other while others appeared as a reaction to others. For instance, Realism was one of the obvious movements during the history of American literary timeline, it has some sub-names as: Psychological Realism and the Social Realism. Realism was a movement against Marxism, the realistic writers tried to depict reality closely. In the other hand Marxism theory was to deal with social class and to explain the conflicts between the different class people. Over time those who consider Steinbeck a sentimentalist, others impugn his portrayal of "earthy characters" as befitting the kind of tough realism favoured by writers such as Rebecca Harding Davis and Stephen Crane. In recent years, however, *The Grapes of Wrath* has seen a critical renaissance as modern critics; looking at the book through economic, historic, and materialistic lenses, replace the New Critical methodology and its strict adherence to textual analysis.

Chapter One

Historical Background of

The Grapes of Wrath

Introduction

The Grapes of Wrath was written in a period when America felt prey to a very serious economic depression which generated a sort of chaos. The environmental disaster in that epoch was among the major repercussions of the economic decline. The situation was very keen that has become being called “The Great Depression” in a time the environmental disaster has started being qualified as “The Dust Bowl”. These two phenomena provoked a process of urbanization which had a serious effect on the individual’s situation before, during and after their departure. Steinbeck sees it important to deal with the dire situation which, generally, makes of man a strange individual at home, to himself and to his origins. *The Grapes of Wrath* could be in fact, read not only as a literary text but as a social document which deals with the callousness of man’s life after being eradicated. The social portraits provided by the author seem to be resultant of a very long process of psychological pressure exerted by dominant forces. The author’s characters are shaped in a way so as to be the embodiments of both social and psychological upheavals, as well as the carriers of the author’s non-conformist mind.

1.1 The Human Plight and Steinbeck’s Source of Inspiration

Steinbeck Seems to have taken the reader back to second half of the nineteenth century, exactly to 1861 when Julia Ward Howe talked about the soldiers and their sufferings in The Battle Hymn of the Republic which appeared for the first time in 1862 in *Atlantic Monthly Magazine*. Steinbeck compares the wrath of the soldiers to the callousness of the workers, he said:

“I should like the whole thing to go in as a page at the beginning. All the verses and the music. This is one of the great songs of the world, and as you read the book you will realize that the words have a special meaning in this book. And I should like the music to be put there in case anyone, any one forgets. The title, Battle Hymn of the Republic, in itself has a special meaning in the light of this book” (JS to his editor Pat Covici) *Atlantic Monthly*

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*Mine eyes have seen the glory of
the coming of the Lord
He is trampling out the vintage
Where **the grapes of wrath** are stored*

The title of Steinbeck's novel *Grapes of Wrath* is so significant that one finds it mentioned in chapter Twelve: "In the souls of people **the grapes of wrath** are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage." (p 449) It is by this chapter that the author has started showing the anger of the individuals and their reaction vis-à-vis the actuality they were living.

As many writers do, Steinbeck gives a title to his novel not just to attract the reader, but most importantly to make the novel a reference with a very indicative, suggestive and symptomatic title. This is undoubtedly why the source of the author's inspiration changes. The Bible was Steinbeck's source for the word *Wrath* rehearses several times in the Bible. For example one mentions: "*So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of **the wrath** of God*". (Revelation 14:19)

The reference from the bible explains the bad state of America while the second reference explains the living conditions of people and their sacrifice in order to live. The concept of "grapes of wrath" has been used to symbolize the oppression of the weak working class people by the powerful, throughout the novel as the wealthy landowners create a depressed survival for the landless workers.

1.2 The Dust Bowl

For nearly a decade the dust storms blew on the southern plains like: Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas and New Mexico. This harsh weather came during the Great Depression¹, the thing that turned the life of millions of families into hell. The region knew high temperature and very

¹ The economic crisis and period of low business activity in the U.S. and other countries, roughly beginning with the stock-market crash in October, 1929, and continuing through most of the 1930s. great depression.(n.d.). Dictionary.com Unabridged. Retrieved April 08, 2016 from Dictionary.com website<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/great-depression>

Chapter One:

strong Great Plains that led to unstoppable dust storms across the entire area. The dust storms hit the area in a wave form for about ten years (10), starting from 1931 until 1939.

As a consequence, 50 million acres of land came to bankrupt, devastated crops and buried fields; it was literally one of the worst environmental catastrophes.

The agricultural practice had fallen short because of the Dust Bowl. The dust storms and the drought complicated the practice. In addition, the Great Depression lowered the farmers' profits and the banks seized the land.

People were dusted out and tracted out of their homes and estates towards the mountains, hungry, tired, sick and their lungs full of dust. They got no place to live and nothing to eat.

Cary Nelson, in her article entitled *The Great Depression*, mentioned the U.S.A government during President Roosevelt adopted a variety of policies to survive the Dust Bowl effects on people and lands. The table² bellow demonstrates a chronological order of the dust storm in the period of ten years and their features and consequences:

The year	Features and Consequences
1931	The southern and Midwestern plains knew severe drought. It was called the 'black blizzards'. Thus plants and crops died and sand had been blown down hills.
1932	The number of the dust storms increased. There were 14 reported storms in a chance of increasing to 38.
1933	March: Roosevelt declared a four-day bank holiday, during which the Congress came up with the Emergency Banking Act of 1933, which stabilized the banking industry and restored people's faith in the banking system by putting the federal government behind it.
	May: The Emergency Farm Mortgage Act allots \$200 million for refinancing mortgages to help farmers facing foreclosure. The Farm Credit Act of 1933

² Modern American Poetry <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/dustbowl.htm>

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	<p>established a local bank and set up local credit associations.</p>
	<p>September: Over 6 million young pigs are slaughtered to stabilize prices. With most of the meat going to waste, public outcry led to the creation, in October, of the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation. The FSRC diverted agricultural commodities to relief organizations. Apples, beans, canned beef, flour and pork products were distributed through local relief channels. Cotton goods were eventually included to clothe the needy as well.</p>
	<p>October: In California's San Joaquin Valley, where many farmers fleeing the plains have gone, seeking migrant farm work, the largest agricultural strike in America's history begins. More than 18,000 cotton workers with the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU) went on strike for 24 days. During the strike, two men and one woman were killed and hundreds injured. In the settlement, the union was recognized by growers, and workers were given a 25 percent raise.</p>
1934	<p>May: Great dust storms spread from the Dust Bowl area. The drought is the worst ever in U.S. history, covering more than 75 percent of the country and affecting 27 states severely.</p> <p>June: The Frazier-Lemke Farm Bankruptcy Act is approved. This act restricted the ability of banks to dispossess farmers in times of distress. Originally effective until 1938, the act was renewed four times until 1947, when it expired. Roosevelt signs the Taylor Grazing Act, which allows him to take up to 140 million acres of federally-owned land out of the public domain and establish grazing districts that will be carefully monitored. One of many New Deal efforts to reverse the damage done to the land by overuse, the program was able to arrest the deterioration, but couldn't undo the historical damage.</p> <p>December: The "Yearbook of Agriculture" for 1934 announces, "Approximately 35 million acres of formerly cultivated land have essentially been destroyed for crop production. . . . 100 million acres now in crops have lost all or most of the topsoil; 125 million acres of land now in crops are rapidly losing topsoil. . . ."</p>
1935	<p>January 15: The federal government forms a Drought Relief Service to coordinate relief activities. The DRS bought cattle in counties that were designated emergency areas, for \$14 to \$20 a head. Those unfit for human consumption - more than 50 percent at the beginning of the program - were</p>

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	<p>destroyed. The remaining cattle were given to the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation to be used in food distribution to families nationwide. Although it was difficult for farmers to give up their herds, the cattle slaughter program helped many of them avoid bankruptcy. "The government cattle buying program was a God-send to many farmers, as they could not afford to keep their cattle and the government paid a better price than they could obtain in local markets."</p>
	<p>April 8: FDR approves the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, which provides \$525 million for drought relief, and authorizes creation of the Works Progress Administration, which would employ 8.5 million people.</p>
	<p>April 14: Black Sunday. The worst "black blizzard" of the Dust Bowl occurs, causing extensive damage.</p>
	<p>April 27: Congress declares soil erosion "a national menace" in an act establishing the Soil Conservation Service in the Department of Agriculture (formerly the Soil Erosion Service in the U.S. Department of Interior). Under the direction of Hugh H. Bennett, the SCS developed extensive conservation programs that retained topsoil and prevented irreparable damage to the land. Farming techniques such as strip cropping, terracing, crop rotation, contour plowing, and cover crops were advocated. Farmers were paid to practice soil-conserving farming techniques.</p>
	<p>December: At a meeting in Pueblo, Colorado, experts estimate that 850,000,000 tons of topsoil has blown off the Southern Plains during the course of the year, and that if the drought continued, the total area affected would increase from 4,350,000 acres to 5,350,000 acres in the spring of 1936. C.H. Wilson of the Resettlement Administration proposes buying up 2,250,000 acres and retiring it from cultivation.</p>
1936	<p>February: Los Angeles Police Chief James E. Davis sends 125 policemen to patrol the borders of Arizona and Oregon to keep "undesirables" out. As a result, the American Civil Liberties Union sues the city.</p>
	<p>May: The SCS publishes a soil conservation district law, which, if passed by the states, allows farmers to set up their own districts to enforce soil conservation practices for five-year periods. One of the few grassroots organizations set up by the New Deal still in operation, the soil conservation district program recognized that new farming methods needed to be accepted and enforced by the farmers on the land rather than bureaucrats in Washington.</p>

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1937	March: Roosevelt addresses the nation in his second inaugural address, stating, "I see one-third of the nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished . . . the test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little." FDR's Shelterbelt Project begins. The project called for large-scale planting of trees across the Great Plains, stretching in a 100-mile wide zone from Canada to northern Texas, to protect the land from erosion. Native trees, such as red cedar and green ash, were planted along fence rows separating properties, and farmers were paid to plant and cultivate them. The project was estimated to cost 75 million dollars over a period of 12 years. When disputes arose over funding sources (the project was considered to be a long-term strategy, and therefore ineligible for emergency relief funds), FDR transferred the program to the WPA, where the project had limited success.
1938	The extensive work re-plowing the land into furrows, planting trees in shelterbelts, and other conservation methods has resulted in a 65 percent reduction in the amount of soil blowing. However, the drought continued.
1939	In the fall, the rain comes, finally bringing an end to the drought. During the next few years, with the coming of World War II, the country is pulled out of the Depression and the plains once again become golden with wheat.

Table 1-1 *Great Depression*, in U.S.A

The Dust Bowl migrants literally met the doomsday, like the Joad family in the *Grapes of Wrath* written by John Steinbeck in 1939, the family who become obliged to leave their home in Oklahoma and migrated to California. They were called the “Okies” because most of the migrants came from Oklahoma. Steinbeck vividly portrayed the natural catastrophe of the “Okies” in the first chapter of his novel.

The clouds appeared, and went away, and in a while they did not try any more. The weeds grew darker green to protect themselves, and they did not spread any more. The surface of the earth crusted, a thin hard crust, and as the sky became pale, so the earth became pale, pink in the red country and white in the gray country. (1992, p.1)

2.3 The Great Depression

According to *the free Dictionary of the English Language* by Harcourt, H.M, Great Depression is “the period of declining and lower economic activity in the worldwide economy from the late 1920s through the 1930s”. In the United States, it began in October 1929 with the stock market crash and decline of the business activity into 1933. Gene Smiley in her article entitled “*Great Depression*” (2008), writes that despite of the depression being a worldwide crisis in the market economies; in some countries it was ‘mild’ but in the United States, it reached its worst decline by “25 percent of all workers and 37 percent of all non farm workers”. Thousands of people starved to death whereas others lost their homes and lands and became “homeless vagabonds”.

John Steinbeck’s *the Grapes of Wrath* is considered a translation of what people’s life used to be like during the thirties. The way the Joads were tracted out of their land because of the Dust Bowl and the greedy bank owners and set for California along with thousands of other families in search for jobs and brighter future, or so they thought. *The Grapes of Wrath* is a story that shows human unity at its peak when it faces hardships, it demonstrates how hard times made humans more supportive, caring and cooperative during those times. These purely human behaviours are shown throughout the novel at one point when Casy said:

Casy said quietly, “I gotta see them folks that’s gone out on the road. I got a feelin’ I got to see them. They gonna need help no preachin’ can give ‘em. Hope of heaven when their lives ain’t lived? Holy Sperit when their own sperit is downcast an’ sad? They gonna need help. They got to live before they can afford to die.”(chap06,p.106)

One of the main reasons that made Steinbeck implies elements of Great Depression and the Dust Bowl immigration movement in his writing of *the Grapes of Wrath* is that his being born during that era near Salinas Valley in California, which made him proud of his origins and bases his writings on his background and experiences. Even his fictional characters seem to

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reflect his views about being bound to their ancestors and their lands which appear clearly in chapter 9 when he writes: *“In the little houses the tenant people sifted their belongings and the belongings of their fathers and of their grandfathers. Picked over their possessions for the journey to the west.”* (chap09 p143)

Steinbeck wishes to imply that how farmers are deeply attached to their belongings and even their ancestors' which make it hard for them to sell it for pennies because they were so desperate for the money.

Well, take it—all junk—and give me five dollars. You're not buying only junk, you're buying junked lives. And more—you'll see—you're buying bitterness. Buying a plow to plow your own children under, buying the arms and spirits that might have saved you. (Ibid)

Conclusion

The Grapes of Wrath was written in the end of the great depression; the great depression was the result of the stock market crash on October 29, 1929 *“The bank is something more than men, I tell you. It's the monster. Men made it, but they can't control it”.* John Steinbeck,(*the Grapes of Wrath*, Ch. 5)

Another fact that hit America was the environmental disaster The Dust Bowl "Houses were shut tight, and cloth wedged around doors and windows, but the dust came in so thinly that it could not be seen in the air, and it settled like pollen on the chairs and tables, on the dishes." (ibid, ch1)

Steinbeck starts from the situation of America and the impact of the external factors then depicts the reaction of people within this he succeed on portraying working people sufferance in a very realistic way.

Chapter Two

Social Classes and the American Dream

The Grapes of Wrath

INTRODUCTION

According to Marzieh Asefi in the article entitled, *Critical Analysis of the Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck*; the writer's life influenced and helped shape the nature of the work a great deal because of the background of its writer, John Steinbeck; when she writes:

Before he became successful as a writer, Steinbeck had many jobs. He worked as a ranch worker, fruit-picker, and a builder. These experiences made his descriptions of the lives of the workers in his novels realistic. (Critical Analysis,p.02)

During the thirties, in which Steinbeck lived, the upper classes felt the need to replace workers with machines in order to make better and faster profits. This action according to Abourahmane Diouf, is called "*mechanization of the agriculture to the capitalism*" (Materialism and Inhumanity in John Steinbeck, 2008), which occurred after the First World War. The bourgeoisies' actions angered the working class people and left most of them helpless when others committed crimes. Like Tom Joad who just got out of jail our years because of a homicide.

Joad leaned toward the driver. "Homicide," he said quickly. "That's a big word _ means I killed a guy. Seven years. I'm sprung in four for keepin' my nose clean. (2014, chap 02, p.64)

Marzieh Asefi mentioned that the social condition of the working class people had a great impact on their psyche and social behaviour; when someone's social stability is being threatened he/she tends to act in a certain way depending on each individual; where others cave and fell to depression others may act recklessly and seek revenge or burn down their entire estate.

2.1 Social Classes in the Grapes of Wrath

Karl Marx¹ says that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” (Habib, M.A.R, 2005,p.530). Marx’s view assures that social classes and human division into different groups is a fundamental fact that cannot be denied. Marx analyses the relationships between people according to their positions in society; that is to emphasize and differentiate between each one’s access to money and power. He distinguished between two major classes the bourgeois and the proletarians² or the workers.

Marx’s ideas about people’s social positions and their control over power and wealth help in understanding the social structure and how the unfortunate ones (farmers) tend to improve their social condition. (Coser,1977)

People with different social backgrounds have different interests; there is no way two different individuals with two different social backgrounds can have the same interests and share the same struggles because according to Marx’s Class theory “Klasse en sich (class in itself) into Klasse fuer sich (class for itself)”; which means that only people with similar positions (power and wealth) can be involved in the same struggles (Ibid). That is to say, the bourgeois and the proletarians can never be “friends” because each one of them has completely different views, interests and struggles. We can relate a certain group of people to the same group if the whole group members perform the same function and way of production. Thus, we can call them an X or Y social class.

¹ Karl Marx, in full Karl Heinrich Marx (born May 5, 1818, Trier, Rhine province, Prussia [Germany]—died March 14, 1883, London, England), revolutionary, sociologist, historian, and economist. He published (with Friedrich Engels) *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei* (1848), commonly known as *The Communist Manifesto*, the most celebrated pamphlet in the history of the socialist movement. He also was the author of the movement’s most important book, *Das Kapital*. These writings and others by Marx and Engels form the basis of the body of thought and belief known as Marxism. (See also socialism; communism.) Karl Marx. (2016). In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Karl-Marx>

² The lowest or one of the lowest economic and social classes in a society. proletariat. (2016).
 Workers see their masters as open mouths monsters that gulp their victims mercilessly and the masters or the money owners see the working class people as varmints or pests that must be crushed and silenced because their only role is to make their masters' lives easier. But the farmers who try to speak up are directly marginalized and considered as Steinbeck call them "a red" or troublemakers:

"Well, you and me got sense. Them goddamn Okies got no sense and no feeling. They ain't human. A human being wouldn't live like they do. A human being couldn't stand it to be so dirty and miserable. They ain't a hell of a lot better than gorillas." (2014,p. 295)

In Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, the bourgeois and the proletarians social classes are shown and described as defined by Karl Marx exactly. First there are the bank owners who represent the bourgeois and the farmers like the Joad Family who represent the proletarians. Steinbeck shows the bourgeois as monster who will not spare the farmers no penny for his own profit:

Well, it's too late. And the owner men explained the workings and the thinking's of the monster that was stronger than they were. A man can hold land if he can just eat and pay taxes; he can do that. (p.85)

He also compares the bank to a living soul that needs food and air to grow, so it feeds itself on others' souls (Profit):

But—you see, a bank or a company can't do that, because those creatures don't breathe air, don't eat side-meat. They breathe profits; they eat the interest on money. If they don't get it, they die the way you die without air, without sidemeat. It is a sad thing, but it is so. It is just so. (Ibid)

John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is considered a verisimilitude³ of the American middle class people. It depicted the social, racial, and economic injustices through Steinbeck's portrayal of life struggles. He represented the inequalities in the American society during the thirties. Steinbeck did not dream of social division and class struggle but they found their way to his writing because he aimed to show the ugly hidden social truth (Kavita: 2015), he said:

The works of the roots of the vines, of the trees, must be destroyed to keep up the price, and this is the saddest, bitterest thing of all. Carloads of orange dumped on the ground. The people came for miles to take the fruit but this could not be.... And men with hoses squirt kerosene on the oranges...a million people hungry, needing the fruit-and kerosene sprayed over the golden mountains. And the smell of rot fills the country. (2015,p.438-39)

In the novel, the authorities of California controlled the migrant movement of the farmers because they had no jobs or houses for them, which made their conditions worse. These practices angered the farmers and brought so much hatred between social classes. According to Coser (1977), in such conditions people tend to “overcome their initial competitiveness in favor of combined action for their collective class interests”. However, being exposed to individual class interests (Bourgeois) makes it impossible for collective class interests to be met due to the competitive mode of production and workers become alienated from the process of production. (Ibid)

2.2 The Effect of Migration on Working –People

“ I 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 . . . every damn one of ’em’s got a little piece of land in his head. An’ never a God damn one of

³ It is the semblance of reality in dramatic or nondramatic fiction. The concept implies that either the action represented must be acceptable or convincing according to the audience's own experience or

knowledge or, as in the presentation of science fiction or tales of the supernatural, the audience must be enticed into willingly suspending disbelief and accepting improbable actions as true within the framework of the narrative. Verisimilitude. (2016). In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/art/verisimilitude>

'em ever gets it. Just like heaven. Ever'body wants a little piece of lan'. I read plenty of books out here. Nobody ever gets to heaven, and nobody gets no land.' John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Steinbeck explained the psychological frustration of farmers because of the loss of their lands, this process caused a wide transformation in the working people such Mueley and the Casy and Tom while Ma Joad was strong enough to belief in her family faith and keep advising her relatives to stay together to stay stronger, The aspects of frustration appeared since the second chapter when Tenant was explaining to Tom and Casy how the process of immigration begun and how his family and others families were forced to leave their lands and how Davis's son (the driver) comes with his CAT to destroy his land , Steinbeck portray the adherence to the lands and they cannot bear the idea of being expelled from the lands where die born and live on it :

I built it with my hands. Straightened old nails to put the sheathing on. Rafters are wired to the stringers with baling wire. It's mine. I built it. You bump it down—I'll be in the window with a rifle. You even come too close and I'll pot you like a rabbit.-"It's not me. There's nothing I can do. I'll lose my job if I don't do it. And look—suppose you kill me? They'll just hang you, but long before you're hung there'll be another guy on the tractor, and he'll bump the house down. You're not killing the right guy (P.91-92)

Through this conversation the reader can see how the tenant's anger is not suitable and useless; The demolition of the tenant's home, shooting the driver won't do change it takes only a few days and a new driver will take the place , and the driver is only following the instructions from his bosses. As those events continue to clarify, the tenant goes far from real potentials for creating change. Through this conversation, Steinbeck depicts the situation of the tenant as hopeless. When Tom Joad knew that his family has been abandoned the land , he and the

preacher become aware what happened ; they decide to stay with Muley Graves to know more about what happened . Mulley is upset and lonely because his family and relatives decided to leave to California, Muley has stayed in order to see what will happened , he taught that he can protect his lend but slowly, he has realized the futility of trying to protect the land.

The fight that the Joads are going through and saying goodbye to the lands and moving on to a new place. They challenges that they face in their situation are economic and emotional. It is obvious that the family is going to leave behind them both economic and sentimental values, hoping that a superior life waits for them in California.

"How can we live without our lives? How will we know it's us without our past? No. Leave it. Burn it. They sat and looked at it and burned it into their memories. How'll it be not to know what land's outside the door? How if you wake up in the night and know -- and know the willow tree's not there? Can you live without the willow tree? Well, no, you can't. The willow tree is you."
(P.145-146)

The journey and move need more sacrifice. Even if the family members are able to make new lives for themselves, they won't forget Oklahoma land that they once lived in. the narrator speaks of the possible for deprived people to come together.

The two men squat on their hams and the women and children listen. Here is the node, you who hate change and fear revolution. Keep those two squatting men apart; make them hate, fear, suspect each other. Here is the anlage of the thing you fear. This is the zygote. For here "I lost my land" is changed; a cell is split and from its splitting grows the thing you hate -- "We lost our land." The danger is here, for two men are not as lonely and perplexed as one. (P.215)

When these persons go about their lives as divide persons, they won't have the power and force to create change. But when they meet others with the similar goals, the united voices will create a change their awareness of the extent of the injustices they face.

It's highly appeared when someone obliged to leave his land where he born and grow up he will get frustrated, when the banks send the tractors to replace the land workers this created a world of shoddiness for the working people and their families and this will led to the loss of the values and create a value crisis, but in the other side the immigration process had a positive side in which we see the corporate of the family and the strong relation in order the face their fate in the previous dialogue between Tenant and the driver the author gives some hints about the case of the working people so Davis boy said that he wouldn't care about other families if they starve to die he only need to do his work and get three dollars in a day to serve his family will tenant said that he will kill the person that starving him and his family .

2.3 The American Dream

The term "American Dream" was coined by James Truslow Adams in his book *The Epic of America* written in 1931. The term was created in order to describe the migrants' hopes and expectations. Workers had a strong desire for better life and decent social conditions which to thousands of farmers meant one place; California. For them, it represented the Promise Land, a land of work, freedom, happiness and new opportunities; Steinbeck writes:

"Why don't you go to California? There's work there and it never gets cold. Why, you can reach out anywhere and pick an orange. Why, there's always some kind of crop to work in. Why don't you go there?" (2014 :)

Steinbeck showed California as the migrants' heaven where they can find jobs and comfort thus it was the land of better life. But those dreams were ripped off after facing reality. The Joads had experienced the failure to fulfill their dream because as many other "the American dream was simple concept: go west, get a job, and become rich." (Asefi: 9); they kind of miscalculated their steps and they had no backup plan.

Leaving their home, land and jobs; the Joads and thousands other migrants had paved the

way for their own distortion because they were so much impelled by their great expectations of wealth and comfort life in the Promise Land (California). They never doubted or asked themselves: WHAT IF?

Why don't you go on west to California? There's work there, and it never gets cold. Why, you can reach out anywhere and pick an orange. Why, there's always some kind of crop to work in. (P.87)

The question that can be asked here is: How people become so naïve to the extent that they believe anything and everything? And why they are willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of what they think it could be better? The answer to this question is simple: DESPERATION. People become so desperate they never once doubted those exotic descriptions of that unknown paradise; it's like wishing to find the lost city of Atlantis without a map.

Unfortunately, the Joads were startled from their dream into “the concrete reality” and realized that they were chasing an “unattainable dream”. Like Connie who realized that the American Dream was a figment of imagination and decided to leave the Joads despite of him leaving a wife and an unborn baby to an unknown future, but for Asefi; Connie was right because he was more realistic.

“...he was simply doing what was realistic and instead followed a future that would provide for him. While the Joads were on a never-ending journey in search for the American Dream, they did not find jobs that suited their hope of a financial lifestyle.” (Ibid,P.10)

Conclusion

Because the novel as I said can be read both as psychological and sociological document, this can be shown in some comments and criticizing documents such and it has a huge impact on readers:

*“... And when I read *The Grapes of Wrath*. That was like reliving my life. Particularly the part where they lived in this Government camp. Because when we were picking fruit in Texas, we lived in a Government place like that. They came around, and they helped the women make mattresses. See, we didn't have anything And they showed us how to sew and make dresses. And every Saturday night, we'd have a dance. And when I was reading *Grapes of Wrath* this was just like*

my life. I was never so proud of poor people before, as I was after I read that book."(Interview with Studs Terkel)

John Steinbeck wants to keep the reader interact with the book and the story by his realistic method so he tackled the society of America and the Okies then he give details about Psychological depression of carachters

You say the inner chapters were counterpoint and so they were – that they were pace changers and they were that too but the basic purpose was to hit the reader below the belt. With the rhythms and symbols of poetry one can get into a reader – open him up and while he is open introduce – thing son an intellectual level which he would not or could not receive unless he were opened up. It is a psychological trick if you wish but all techniques of writing are psychological tricks."(JS to HerbertSturtz,1953)

Chapter Three

Steinbeck's Realistic Style in

The Grapes of Wrath

INTRODUCTION:

In this chapter we will explain first the Idea of how the capitalist exploit the working-class people then we will try to how important is the role of the mother and how she contributes in keeping the family strong in order to face their common fate together, within the cruelty of American society, Ma Joad endeavours to help her family to get out from their troubles. Those concepts helps Steinbeck to give a vivid image and portrayal for what was happening to the American Working-Class people in America that time , also we will tackle some points and talk about some major characters and how they change throughout the novel .

3.1 The Grapes of Wrath and Marxism

Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* revolves about farmers and worker rights, because the hope of the corn harvest as the Joad's family had two choices the best of them is bad whether to stay in Ohio and starve to death or immigrate to west where the farms are fertile, but they seems that they escape from hell to fall in another hell, in California the Joad's family and the other immigrant workers face a cruelty and injustice , the capitalist and land owners treat them in a bad manner , they all the same in the embezzlement of the Okies and disrespect their dignity , even they were working for a long time I a day they got paid a little they can just buy some pieces of food for their family , and the rotten situation caused by Capitalism , in the same time that people were starving to death , the capitalist were throwing and burning the fruits because if they save it the price will minimize .and also they do the same for the cotton and corn fields

The author does not use complicated narrative techniques n his narration, he only goes realistic in depicting the miserable life of poor working class people and their depressed daily life and warning that the situation will get bad and worst

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“There is a crime here that goes beyond denunciation. There is a sorrow here that weeping cannot symbolize. There is a failure here that topples all our success ... in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage”

These oppressive practises that led to wrath and anger were similar to the author's life and it had a wide impact in formulating a good novel with realistic style because Steinbeck worked as a farmer, carpenter and a worker on picking up fruits. The novel's value and role is not only talking about the deep situation of American society it also helps for the reformation in America and starting to treat farmers in a good way.

Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is considered as a witness about the bad experiences of the 1930s, by giving an exact reflection about social conditions, Lucas and Gorky call this 'social realism' (Barry Maine)

The immigrants head to California dreaming to improve their social class and to enjoy a respectable life, this can be shown in Jim Casey's statement about the reasons of the worker's journey :

Casey said, "I been walkin' aroun' in the country. Ever'body's askin' that. What we comin' to? Seems to me we don't never come to nothin'. Always on the way. Always goin' and goin'. Why don't folks think about that? They's movement now. People moving. We know why, an' we know how. Movin' 'cause they got to. That's why folks always move. Movin' 'cause they want somepin better'n what they got. An' that's theon'y way they'll ever git it. Wantin' it an' needin' it, they'll go out an' git it»

The story of Joads begins in mid 1930s at the summer. The story was in an epoch of risky dearth, the dust bowl has devastated the harvest. All through their long trip they pass by numerous towns and paths. The most representative road in the *Grapes of Wrath* is highway sixty-six which was recognized as the "Migrant Road". In the beginning of the novel the

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author unfolds the situation of Oklahoma land workers during the dust bowl, the second part of the story reports the difficulties confronted by the Okies in California (Coweley 2005). Steinbeck's opinions about the agri-business was that the banks was focusing to gain large and immense profits from the investments. They make a decision to throw away the classical agriculture ; they wants to use machines as a replacement for of the manual labour .Steinbeck criticize the greed of those banks: "The Bank—or the Company—needs—wants—insists—must have—as though the Bank or the Company were a monster, with thought and feeling, which had ensnared them."

The fourteenth chapter in the Grapes of Wrath is important with the use social aspects of the *Grapes of Wrath*, it gives details about the "working class" awareness is in the formation this all reads as that Steinbeck is addressing a warning to capitalist .

"The Western States are nervous under the beginning change. Need is the stimulus to concept, concept to action. A half-million people moving over the country; a million more, restive to move; ten million more feeling the first nervousness.

Business greed turn land owners into modern slaves, they dispossessed farmers, hired the cheapest labour, and offered them inhuman living conditions. These deeds were dictated by capitalist greed .the idea which the civil war was fought turn to be a sham in the hands of capitalists. Steinbeck identifies his social protest with a rhetoric of suffering and sacrifice that is consolidated by certain biblical references. For instance, Jim organizes a strike of peach pickers and cried out the vigilantes who come after him; the story of the grapes of wrath is a story of community of immigrants. The novel doesn't focus in Joads only but it uses them as a multi dimensional for all the Okies, for this reason, the people at power, especially the large ranch owners, regarded the novel as a "mere" piece of propaganda (Brian, E Rails) and Steinbeck as one of most threatening men in America, Steinbeck places of the American system of capitalism.

3.2 The Role of Mother and Women in the Grapes of Wrath

You got to have patience. Why, Tom—us people will go on livin' when all them; people is gone. Why, Tom, we're the people that live. They ain't gonna wipe us out. Why we're the people—we go on (P 180)

This is the wisdom that Ma Joad learnt from the difficult and hard experiences that she faced, when she saw that the anger might drive her family to loss their values after the disappointed walk for the shadow of the good life in California and she also thought them that the simple people are always can face life hardships .Ma Joad endeavours to direct her family to the success.

From the starting of the novel the role of women in was clearly appeared, Ma Joad is a woman of strength and hope who is the backbone of the family. She represents the Mother Nature model while she was directing her family in order to stay strong and to serve her family when the family needs her most. Steinbeck focuses the importance of Ma's character starting by the physical describing of Ma.

Ma was heavy, but not fat; thick with child-bearing and work. her ankles, and her strong, broad, bare feet moved quickly and deftly over the floor", Ma is described with these features to show her strength as a mother who has control and survives through hard situations (p95).

She was a very strong woman she knows how to do her role in the family. Ma distinguishes when it is her time to help the family and when it is appropriate to step back and let the father run things. It is an unsaid statement but known by all in the family that «ma was powerful in the group" and they look to her for important decision making (p133). She is looked to for guidance and decisions so the family looks to her on how to react to situations. If mom is unhappy then the family is unhappy. When ma is upset you know something is wrong. Ma understands this concept and knows that she must control her reactions and emotions. Ma's "...full face was not soft; it was controlled kindly" because she knows she is

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the role model in her family. When Tom left to go to jail, she had to control her real feelings toward missing him because she doesn't want the family to be upset as well. Al explains to Tom "she mourned when you were gone. Done it all to herself. Kind of crying down inside of her through. We could tell what she was thinking about, though" they knew how she was feeling even though she tried to hide it (p227). All Ma's wants to see is that her family live in happiness. But it's hard for a mother to accomplish this when it's not in her control. The hardest thing for a mother to do is let her children make their own decisions and live their own lives. Also the role of women is shown when Rose Sharon save the life of the old man at the end of the story when she feed him.

3.3 The Turtle VS Immigrant Workers:

John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath on its first chapters manifest by a narrative passage and wide description. Such when the Author speaks about the turtle appropriate, the turtle's taking part in the novel considered as a stylistic device; but as the plot progresses the turtle become parallel to the story of the Okies.

"Nobody can't keep a turtle though. They work at it and work at it, and at last one day they go out and away they go—off somewheres. It's like me." Jim Casey, page 28

It strengthens the novel events by giving an archetype image of slow travel and lifestyle. With the various depictions, the begging of the novel has several cases of personification of the natural environment. . The turtle also resemble the novel's characters. Such the Joads are heading to California; the turtle also crosses the desert, at a snail's pace destination. Beyond this, the turtle give an image for the successful travellers and what they should have: strength of mind, flexibility, carries their home on their backs (figuratively) as the turtle travelling around with its home on its back. The possible difficulties reflecting the willpower the Joads must have to fight of dirty living conditions. When the turtle is stopped or face some obstacles in its travelling it does not worry losing time or what it will face in the

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future, it only do some efforts to continue its course. This present the turtle benefit's over the Joads who are thinking only of getting money or pass the wasteland. Also, the turtle teach the immigrants how they carry their homes. Literally, the Joads make a reasonable imitation of carrying a home on their backs with their loaded and customized car; psychologically on the other hand, the Joads face immense anxiety from the loss of their homes, a disturbance to the peace and success of their home. Is repetitively mentioned, so far the Joads break up many time.

This contrast between the turtle achievement and the epic fight of humans proposes Steinbeck's larger message about what is essential to survive.

3.4 Naturalism in The Grapes Of Wrath

Became the dominant literary movement in American fiction by the turn of the 20th century. Early naturalistic writers included Stephen Crane ("The Red Badge of Courage"); Jack London ("The Call of the Wild"); Theodore Dreiser ("An American Tragedy") Many of their stories manifested Darwin's theory of "survival of the fittest." Naturalism is a form of extreme realism: "Human beings are animals in a natural world, responding to environmental forces and internal stresses and drives, over none of which they have control and none of which they fully understand."

At the heart of this ideology is pessimistic Determinism: the notion that the causes of human tragedy lie beyond the powers of the individual The movement was influenced by Marxist theory, which holds that class struggle is the central element of social change in Western society This was coupled with economic problems stemming from urbanization of America at the end of the 19th century this combination portrayed socio-economic forces that overwhelm individual lives naturalists focused on the lives of lower-class characters struggling for survival in an alien and often hostile society: a society insensitive to their personal needs for fulfilment or self-expression Their stories are often told by an "all-

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knowing" narrator who can relate deterministic factors far beyond the knowledge of the characters affected by them; the tendency in naturalistic works is that no one emerges triumphant, because simple survival constitutes a moral victory. Beaten down by an inhuman

System and bad luck, many of the naturalist writers' characters end as suicide victims. John Steinbeck was not a dedicated student of American naturalism, yet his themes and methods are often closely tied to this literary movement. Some elements of *The Grapes of Wrath* might justify the term "naturalistic," but the characters also clearly make humane choices or decisions that allow them to overcome obstacles and move forward. They do more than survive.

Conclusion

Through this chapter we have analysed some symbols and we dive deep on the story to give some reasons that help to consider the work of Steinbeck a realistic work, we explain the symbols of turtle and compare it with the life of immigrants workers, we have dealt with the role of mother and women in the novel and we have tackled some critics and theories to explain why the work is realistic

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Unity and common sense are seen as keys to get rid of social discrimination despite the state of poorness. The Okies are a good model. They have challenged all the difficulties because they have tried to face the situation they were put in owing to social segregation. They have struggle with bare hands; they did not use weapons but simply their minds to denounce inhumanity and ill-treatments. For the Okies, "perfection" means to get rid of oppression, the achievement of equal opportunity, equal rights and equal justice-victory for human dignity.

Steinbeck success in his novel because he talks to the mind and emotions of the readers , any reader can felt sorry for the Okies and the others migrant workers , Steinbeck was so powerful realistic and give a good novel can be considered as a documentary document due to their good and significant content .

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