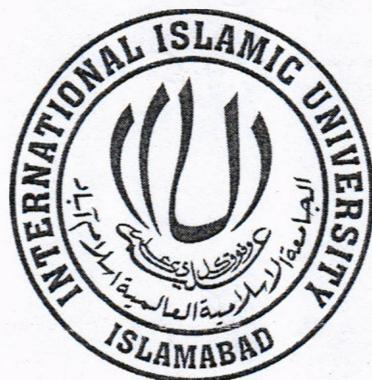


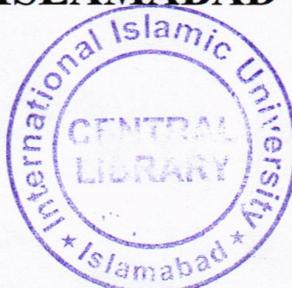
Forms of Hegemony in Steinbeck's *The Pearl*: A Marxist Approach



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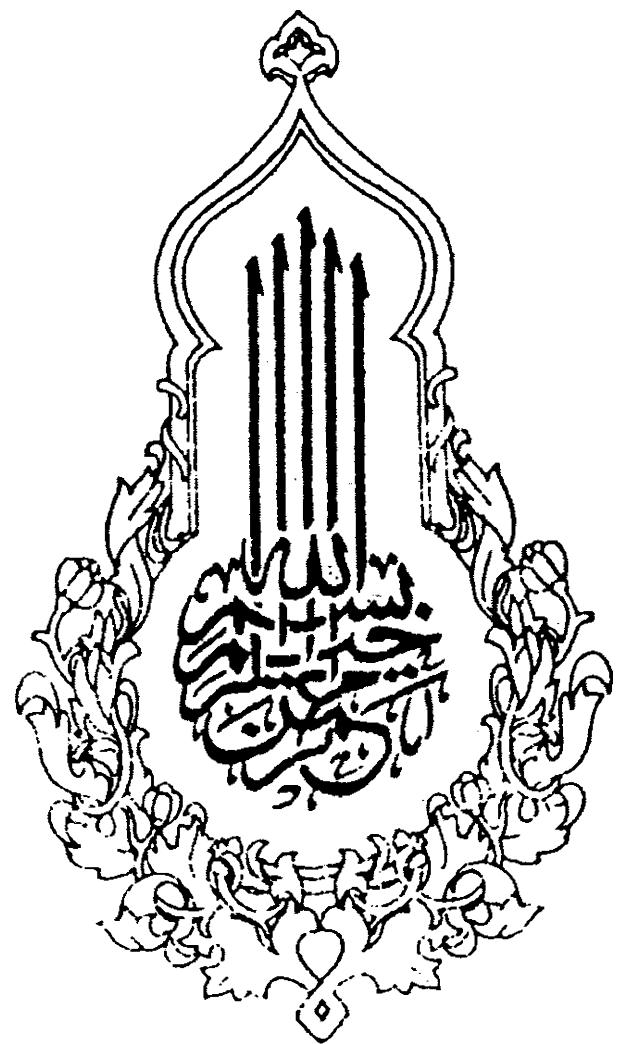
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**Forms of Hegemony in Steinbeck's *The Pearl*:
A Marxist Approach**

(A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M Phil) IN ENGLISH
LITERATURE)

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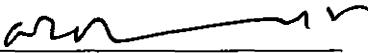
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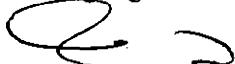
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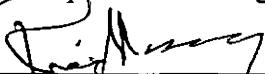
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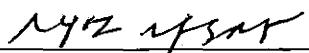
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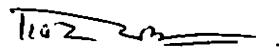
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Declaration

I, Riaz Muhammad, Reg. No. 96-FLL/MSENG/F08, student of M Phil (English) at International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) do hereby solemnly declare that the thesis entitled "Forms of Hegemony in Steinbeck's *The Pearl*: A Marxist Approach" is entirely my own creation; all the sources have been duly acknowledged. This work was carried out as a pre-requisite for the degree of Master of Philosophy (M Phil) in English from the afore-mentioned University.

I further declare that this work has neither been submitted nor published earlier, nor it will be submitted in future to obtain any other degree from this or other institution.



Date: November 17, 2011

Riaz Muhammad.

Dedicated to

أُمِّي وَأَبِّي

(My Parents)

چا ”چه خان خاوری او زه گل کزم“

(Who blossomed me into a flower at their own expense)

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Note on style manual and the text

The style manual followed in this work for intext citations and bibliography is MLA as prescribed in *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, 3rd edition, and *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition, published by the Modern Language Association in 2008 and 2009 respectively. As a text, the latest UBS World Classic (2000) edition of *The Pearl*, published by UBS Publishers, Distributors Ltd. New Delhi, has been used.

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this work is to discover various forms of hegemony in *The Pearl* and thereby to highlight the universality of the *novella*. Four social paradigms—communal or class, economic, gender-based, and religious—have been identified in the *novella* and they have been analysed in the light of Marxist approach; in the analysis of each of the four paradigms hegemony of the chosen few over the rest has been emphasised and this is the main factor which underpins universality of *The Pearl*; this leads to a Marxist realism in the *novella*: reality or truth has been discerned in the constant friction between the-haves and the-have-nots. Hegemony has been identified as the *leitmotif* or recurring theme of the *novella*; this recurring theme of hegemony threads not only the afore-said paradigms, but it could also be discerned as a socio-economic problem spotlighted in Steinbeck's other novels—*In Dubious Battle* (1936), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), and *The Wayward Bus* (1947)—too.

Main body of this work could be divided into two parts: Textual Analysis and Discussion; the former is a micro-analysis of *The Pearl* in a pedagogical style, the latter is a macro- analysis of the events and incidents happening in *The Pearl*; the second part also seeks various examples from the Third World countries; such examples have been compared with the events and incidents of *The Pearl*; hence universality and *verisimilitude* of the *novella* have been sought. It has been concluded that herein Steinbeck has took pains to highlight the miserable life of the have-nots and to resent the hegemony of the imperial powers over the natives—the Spaniards and the little Indians of Latin America respectively.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

In the wake of the uni-polar world order, the concept of “hegemony” has precipitated manifold. Most of the developed countries strive to ensure their political, economic, and military hegemony on one pretext or another. Similarly, a lot of factions and pressure-groups, at regional levels, are at daggers drawn either to ensure their respective hegemony, or to resist others hegemony, or to safeguard their fundamental or constitutional rights against the encroachments of those who want to maintain their hegemony. This tendency has led to armed clashes between the rival countries concerned at international level; while at regional level, it has led to political disorder, economic instability, social unrest, upheavals, street demonstrations, violence, regionalism, parochialism, and sectarianism. Besides, in order to ensure their puritan clerical hegemony, the very first decade of the third millennia has been marred by the desperate suicide attacks of the fundamentalists and extremists in the Third World countries. Thus, in the recent world scenario, a person possessing a Marxist bent of mind cannot do but to perceive the undercurrent of “hegemony” in a text like *The Pearl*.

1.2 *The Pearl*, its setting and its author

John Steinbeck (1902—68) is one of the greatest American writers of the twentieth century. He was born in Salinas, California, and attended Stanford University. Then he moved to New York as a reporter and a bricklayer. Steinbeck was interested in American politics and had been a patriotic figure. During his literary career he tried to give vent to

his ideas and notions through his works; in these works he criticized some policies of the American government, as he did in his often-cited novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), and espoused others, as he did in his propaganda novel *The Moon is Down* (1942).¹ During the Second World War he reported as a journalist from battlefronts in Italy and Africa. “Known widely behind the Iron Curtain, Steinbeck accepted an invitation to visit the Soviet Union, and [he] reported [this] trip in *A Russian Journal* (1948).”² Not only that, during those years a large number of Russians were voracious for his books and they read them, mostly on the sly to avoid the watchful eyes of the Big Brother, with a lot of interest because they thought that the author has espoused the interests of the common man therein; but the then Russian government labeled his work as “anti-Communist. This must have delighted the author, who at home was still resented for his presentation of the down-trodden and was labeled by some as a Communist”.³ Apart from Russian revolutionaries, Steinbeck also catered for the Mexican revolutionaries and wrote the screenplay for *Viva Zapita!* in 1950; it was a film about their revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata; it was released posthumously in 1975. In 1962 he was awarded with the Nobel Prize for literature. *The Pearl*, written in 1945, is second only to his master-piece *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) in the pecking order. *The Pearl* is nothing but a socio-economic critique of the mini-society of La Paz which is situated at the far end of the Baja Peninsula or Lower California that extends from north to south in the North Pacific Ocean in its west and south; in the east there is the *Golfo de California* on the far side of

¹ Cynthia Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002) 11.

² X. J. Kennedy, *Literature: An introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, 4th ed. (The United States of America: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1987) 206.

³ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 11.



Setting of *The Pearl*, Mexico: Lower California and the mainland.

which is the mainland of Mexico; while in the north Lower California shares its border with the American states of California and Arizona. La Paz, setting of *The Pearl*, could be located on the geographical map given at p. 3.

Once La Paz was famous as a commercial hub for pearls; Lower California was an isolated territory with arid land, snow-capped mountains and steep valleys in the background; the barren lands would sustain too little crops. Native Indians have been the aboriginal inhabitants of this region; till the recent past they would live in isolated communities, at the outskirts, with impoverished conditions. With the advent of Hernan Cortes in 1519, Spanish imperialists firmed their roots therein; they became to be known as Spanish *conquistadores* and they occupied most of the urban areas. The aborigines resented the imperialist onslaughts; resultantly, the region was marked by ethnic polarization.

The Pearl has been written in the background of a folk-tale attributed to the aboriginal culture of Lower California. Steinbeck went on a scientific expedition to the Gulf of California in 1940. He went there with his friend Ed Ricketts who had launched a company known as "Pacific Biologicals"; that company would supply marine specimens to school Labs and researchers. He visited La Paz during this trip and came across the culture of the native Indians. According to the folk-tale an Indian boy found a unique pearl; it was so precious that he had not to work further for his livelihood. The huge amount of money expected from the sale of the pearl was considered enough to fulfil all his basic necessities of a comfortable life. In order to sell his pearl, the boy went to La Paz with great expectations. He took his pearl to a dealer but the latter undervalued it; then the boy visited a few other pearl-dealers but all underestimated his precious pearl

and they offered to buy it only for pea-nuts. The boy discerned the collusion of the pearl-dealers and returned to his village in utter dejection; he went to the nearby beach and hid the pearl under a stone. Strangely enough, that night some unknown persons attacked the boy, searched his clothes, and gave him a sound beating. For the next night he put up with a friend, but both were beaten, injured, and the friend's house was thoroughly searched. In order to escape his pursuers, the boy left his village but was intercepted and tortured. In order to get rid of the haunting forces, he returned to his village, went to the beach quietly, took out his hidden pearl, and threw it violently back into the sea; thus, he succeeded to liberate himself from the sinister effects of the pearl. Steinbeck toyed with the ideas of the story for four years and finally started to weave its various threads in the form of *The Pearl* during the winter of 1944—45. He has also briefly narrated this story in his *Sea of Cortez* (1941).

The Pearl is “a simple story well told and at the same time a complicated work of art well constructed, [it] has long been a work popular with students in secondary school and college [in USA] ... The combination of simple story, strongly established symbolism, social commentary, and important themes ... makes [sic] this a literary work that may well become a classic”.⁴ The entire story has been viewed as a struggle between the-haves and the-have-nots; the struggle is being waged for their respective social and economic uplift. Both the classes have been juxtaposed in the *novella*; the class conflict, needless to say, is the main characteristic of Capitalism against which Marxism wants to wage a decisive war. For example, in the very first chapter the narrator portrays the

⁴ Ernest E. Karsten, Jr, *Thematic Structure in The Pearl*”, published in The English Journal, Vol. 54, No. 1(Jan. 1965) 1, published by National Council of Teachers of English.

antagonism between Kino's, the protagonist's, race and that of the doctor, who belongs to the bourgeoisie, in these words:

This doctor was not of his people. This was of a race which for nearly four hundred years had beaten and starved and robbed and despised Kino's race, and frightened it too, so that the indigene came humbly to the door. And as always when he came near to one of this race, Kino felt weak and afraid and angry at the same time. Rage and terror went together. He could kill the doctor more easily than he could talk to him, for all of the doctor's race spoke to all of Kino's race as though they were simple animals.⁵

Such conflicts between the-haves and the-have-nots have obsessed the minds of all philosophers, especially of Marxist bent of mind, from Plato (c. 429—347 BC), the first Greek philosopher who expounded the idea of a utopian socialist state in his *The Republic* (c. 360 BC), down to Lenin (1870—1924), the first leader and Premier of the USSR (1917—24) and communist theoretician. In this respect a notable American Marxist critic Fredric Jameson quotes Marx and Engels themselves in his "On Interpretation: Literature as a Socially Symbolic Act", as under:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles: freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman—in a word, oppressor and oppressed—stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of contending classes.⁶

Himself a product of a middle-class family, Steinbeck was interested in the socio-economic issues besetting the common man. He himself spent much of his time working among and establishing friendly terms with labourers at a sugar factory and other scattered ranches while he was a college student. He "knew and liked" such characters from the rank and file and duly represented them in his *Tortilla Flat* (1935), *In Dubious Battle* (1936), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). In these

⁵ John Steinbeck, *The Pearl*, (New Delhi: UBS, Publishers, Distributors Ltd., 2000) 8.

⁶ Fredric Jameson, *Twentieth – Century Literary Theory: A Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. K. M. Newton (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1997) 182.

works he underlined the miserable life of the common man. Besides, *The Harvest Gypsies* is a collection of his articles he got published in the *San Francisco News*; therein he tried to highlight the sufferings befallen to the displaced communities in California.⁷ The works of Steinbeck have been given in Appendix-B.

Like his *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), *The Pearl* could be described as a thesis novel—a novel that tries to highlight a social, political, communal, or religious problem and which seeks its solution; a thesis novel wants to differentiate right from wrong, to demarcate between just and unjust, and often advocates sudden changes; in other words, it exposes social evils and addresses its possible solutions. Thus, certain ideas and beliefs on part of the novelist underpin his or her thesis novel; this leads to his or her commitment. *Commitment* is a much debated term in Marxist criticism and they often attach it with “alignment” of the writer too. When an author is committed or *engage* it means that his or her work stands for the propagation of some ideas and notions, some ideology in order to initiate social reforms. Raymond Williams suggests that Marxists strongly believes “that writing, like other practices, is in an important sense always aligned: that is to say, that is variously expresses, explicitly or implicitly, specifically selected experience from a specific point of view,” of the author. About “alignment” he states that it is “a recognition of specific men in specific (and in Marxist terms class) relations to specific situations and experiences”.⁸ Since many of Steinbeck’s works condemn the oppressive social and economic structures, highlight the pitiable conditions of the wretched, and resent the wide gulf between the-haves and the-have-nots, so it can be safely said that he committed or *engaged* himself to the socio-economic uplift of the

⁷ Burkhead, *Student Companion to Steinbeck*, 18—19.

⁸ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1977) 199.

common man. Moreover, he aligned himself time and again, especially in his Nobel Prize accepting speech, in no uncertain terms, with the down-trodden. The story of *The Pearl* is not a light one; it portrays a realistic world with the brush of Marxist realism: a world wherein the-haves-nots are constantly oppressed and deprived by the greedy and the wealthy; such situation could be observed in other societies of the Third World countries as well.

1.3 Fundamentals of Marxist Criticism

Marxist literary critics have enumerated the following salient features of Marxist criticism:

(A): Since almost every aspect of human life is determined by economic forces which have been described as “base” or “infrastructure” of the human society by Marxist critics, they have described this theory as “economic determinism” or “the economic structure of society”. This base includes the economy, the material production, the transportation, the exchange system, and the like of a society. The concept of the “determining base” has been amply illustrated by Raymond Williams, the most important British Marxist critic and theoretician of culture:

... when we talk of “the base”, we are talking of a process and not a state. And we cannot ascribe to that process certain fixed properties for subsequent translation to the variable processes of the superstructure. ... “The base” has come to include, especially in certain twentieth-century developments, a strong and limiting sense of basic industry. The emphasis on heavy industry, even, has played a certain cultural role.⁹

According to Marxism, the materialistic composition of a society, that includes the means of production, the exchange system, and the transportation infra-structure, leads to

⁹ Raymond Williams, *Contemporary Literary Criticism: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 2nd ed., eds. Robert Con Davis and Ronald Schleifer (New York: Longman, 1989) 380.

such a super-structure of the society concerned that reflects all these things either explicitly or implicitly; the super-structure “consists of the nonmaterial aspects of [a] society” and includes the religion, the law, education, art and literature, philosophy, codes of morals, government, patriotism, the society’s concerned world-view or *weltanschauung*, as the Germans call it, and its customs and traditions. Harmon further explains that the super-structure is exploited by the commanding class for two purposes: first, it is used as a handy tool by those who are at the helm of affairs in order to justify and rationalize their position in the society concerned; all the components of the super-structure (media, ideology, various institutions, laws, etc.) are (mis)used to support the hegemonic position of the commanding class; consequently, the laws enacted, the policies implemented, the moral codes advocated, the religion professed, the ideology embraced, ... all these non-material aspects of a society are (mis)used to further interests of only the chosen few. Second, the super-structural elements are employed as weapons of the commanding class to maintain its own superior status and the subordinate status of the obeying class¹⁰. About the significance of “the base” and “the superstructure” and their inter-relationship, Williams further elaborates:

Any modern approach to a Marxist theory of culture must begin by considering the proposition of a determining base and a determined superstructure. ... in the transition from Marx to Marxism, and in the development of mainstream Marxism itself, the proposition of the determining base and the determined superstructure has been commonly held to be the key to Marxist cultural analysis.¹¹

For an illustrated form of the determining base and the resultant super-structure see p. 10.

¹⁰ M. Judd Harmon, *Political Thought, from Plato to the Present*, (USA: MacGraw Hill Book Company, 1968) 394.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 378.

The determining base

ECONOMY, PRODUCTION, EXCHANGE

ECOLOGY

The resultant super structure

LAW, EDUCATION, RELIGION, POLITICS, ARTS
CULTURE, CUSTOMS, TRADITIONS, MEDIA

ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

(B): A text can be considered as a production of the prevalent social structure; it can be interpreted as a social document, a spokesperson, a mirror reflecting the norms and notions which the society concerned has adopted, mostly by tacit consent, for its day-to-day life. Terry Eagleton says that a literary text should be considered as a certain production of the dominant ideology.¹²

In this regard further he suggests that it is necessary for Marxist criticism that a text should not be interpreted in isolation of its historical perspective; rather due attention should be given to “its forms, styles and meanings”. He opines that the foundation of Marxist criticism lies on its revolutionary understanding of history.¹³

(C): In Marxist literary criticism the context of the text is related to the social-class status of the writer; in this regard the writer’s family background, his/her track record, and his/her experiences are focused.

(D): Another significant tenet of Marxist literary criticism is to politicize the literary text, that is, in most of the cases, a literary work is considered to be a child of the prevailing political circumstances; therefore, such works should be interpreted in the background of such circumstances. For example, the works of Milton are criticized in the

¹² Terry Eagleton, *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory: A Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. K. M. Newton (New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1997) 171.

¹³ Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (Methuen, 1976) 3.

background of the Puritan interregnum (1649—60), the works of Dryden are interpreted in the background of the Restoration (1660—1700), the lyrical poems of Shelley are analysed in the background of the French Revolution (1789), the novels of Dickens are explained in the background of the Regency (1811—20), or that of Virginia Woolf in the background of the two World Wars.

1.4 Hypothesis/ Problem Statement

Whether hegemony, in its different forms under the umbrella of Capitalism, is the dominant feature of the mini-society of La Paz in The Pearl?

The hypothesis indicates that the concept of “hegemony” possesses a pivotal position in the thesis; the statement has been formulated in the light of the events and incidents happening in *The Pearl*, and these events and incidents have been juxtaposed and correlated to events and incidents that could be observed in the day-to-day life without any exceptions; this leads to the universality of the text. Thus, though written sixty-five years back, the verisimilitude or *vraisemblance*, as the French critics call it, of the *novella* holds water even today.

1.5 Objectives and Significance of the Study

The Pearl is an important piece of modern literature because of a number of reasons: first, it is significant for its universality: the same conflict between the-haves and the-have-nots, both on local and global levels, can be observed everywhere in every time and every clime. Every individual and every state, like the parties in *The Pearl*, want to further their own material gains at the expense of others. It is nothing but a Hegelian repetition of history — a materialistic interpretation of history. Second, though *The Pearl*

is considered as second only to the *magnum opus* of Steinbeck, very little has been written about it. It is hardly mentioned or referred to as compared to his *Of Mice and Men* (1937) or *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) or as the works of his compatriots William Faulkner (1897—1962) and Ernest Hemingway (1898—1961) are cited and being commented on. Third, this *novella* is also a part of the syllabi in many universities of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, as they have baptized the former North West Frontier Province or NWFP, especially of Peshawar University at the graduate level at least for the last three decades; but it is being taught in the traditional manner — the students are being provided with a mere literal translation without any reference to its universality, its symbolic nature, its allegorical status, and the various themes thereof; therein it is being treated as a mere scientific journal without any hidden or underlying message; the students could not comprehend the significance of its sub-text. Fourth, the researcher of this work has already worked on William Blake's *The School Boy*, his *London*, and a portion of *The Pearl*, and has analysed them in the light of Marxist literary theory. Accordingly, the ultimate purpose of the study is to highlight the universality of the *novella* which condemns the cut-throat competition for concentration of capital; to ascertain the views of Steinbeck as he sympathized with the Soviet and Mexican revolutionaries; to acquaint the students with its literary importance, its sub-text, and to remind them of how a literary piece is used, in a subtle manner, to probe the mentality and attitudes of the author related to the aspects of day-to-day life; and to develop the already mini-assignment into a full-sized thesis.

1.6 Rationale for the Study

To acquaint the readers with the sub-text of *The Pearl* is the *raison d'être* of the study. As there are a lot of lacunae or aporias in the works, and that is very few, about *The Pearl*, it has been tried to bridge some of these lacunae; for example, no up-to-date indigenous work has ever mentioned the secondary issues of economic manoeuvres of an open-market, the economic hegemony of the few, the gender-based violence and the persistent hegemony of hard sex in patriarchal societies, and the religious hegemony of certain clerics who invariably hoodwink the laity; in this work all these issues have been considered as *leitmotif* of *The Pearl*.

CHAPTER 2

Main portion of this chapter (2.1) has been dedicated to literature review; herein Gramsci's notion of "hegemony" has been thoroughly discussed: it has been discussed how he distinguishes "hegemony" from direct "rule". Moreover, Althusser's notions of *Ideological State Apparatuses* (ISAs) and *Repressive Structures* have been elaborated and exemplified with details; in this connection several examples have been given from current world politics; such points aim to highlight universality of Marxist criticism as well as of the *novella*. Methodology of the thesis has also been discussed in section 2.2 and illustrated on p. 29.

2.1 Literature Review

The art of governance, whether it be good governance or bad governance, and a masterful position go hand in hand; different circles describe this masterful position in different terms that depend upon their respective positions in the paradigm of the society concerned: some describe it as their "Divine Right"¹, others personified this position, intermingled themselves with the *soi-disant* concept, and christened themselves as "shadow of God"² on the Earth; some interpreted it as a burden shouldered by them to rectify or mend the ways of the coloured peoples, others denounced it as their expansionism and oppression; some linked it solely with their caste and specified only themselves to decorate such masterful positions; some described it as a vicegerancy, others label it as a theocracy or Puritanism; some call it as a supreme power or sovereignty, others name it only a trust within specific circles; some described it as their

¹ Mazher-ul-Haque, *Political Science: Theory and Practice*, 8th ed., (Lahore: Bookland, 1999) 132.

² *Ibid.*

paramountcy, others resisted it as their imperialism; some extol it as their economic and political advancement, others dub it as their cultural onslaught, and hence “neocolonialism”³; some call it their “mandate”, others undermine it as “aggression” or “encroachment”; some interpret it as their parliamentary and constitutional power, others label it as one of their Machiavellian tactics; some interpret it as their authority, others misname it as oligarchy; some describe it as “majority rule”, others undervalue it as a “mob rule”;..., in all the cases, some want to gain the upper hand to dominate others, upon one pretext or another, while the rest want to get themselves liberated from the domination of the former; consequently, a perpetual social friction ensues. The concept of such dominancy and subjugation leads to “hegemony”.

The concept of “hegemony” has been hammered away at by different political and social thinkers. The Russian Marxists equalized it with the power of political bigwigs to articulate “a revolutionary political consciousness”. Gramsci (1891—1937), himself a founding member of the Communist Party of Italy, modified the notion of “hegemony” and said that it implies “the power exercised by a dominant group in society through the creation of consent for its own values and ideas among subordinated classes”. According to Gramsci, the consent of the rank and file of a society is articulated by “hegemony”; the “coercive power” of the state interacts with such consent and hence they form a “civil society” that includes institutions like the family, the church, schools, media, trade unions, art and literature, etc. Gramsci ascribed the integration, from small, scattered principalities, of Italy to the hegemonic position of a certain class during the nineteenth century.⁴

³ Saheed Adeyinka Adejumobi, “Neocolonialism”, *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*, 2004 ed.

⁴ Rajeev S. Patke, “Antonio Gramsci (1891—1937)”, *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*, 2004 ed.

Though much is still ambiguous in Gramsci's concept of "hegemony", his work was used as a prototype by Marxist critics. He distinguished "rule" (*dominio*) from "hegemony". He further elaborated that "rule" is a manifestation of direct political dominancy and, withal, it could be turned into coercive forms in times of crises. On the other hand, "hegemony" is "a complex interlocking of political, social, and cultural forces" operating in a normal situation; in other words, the active social and cultural forces are the main constituents of "hegemony".⁵

According to Gramsci, the ruling intelligentsia join hands with active cultural forces of the prevailing period in a specific society and they bring about hegemony; he elaborates "hegemony" as the dominant position of one class over the rank and file; this dominant position or domination is enhanced and justified by certain ideas, notions, and cultural forms that provide a tacit consent of the dominated, mostly the rank and file, for the domination or rule of the chosen few. Gramsci further elaborated that the institution(s) of state play an important role to strengthen the intramural unity of the dominant groups. Similarly, some institutions of civil society, for example the church, schools, the media, and popular culture, mediate "between the private sphere of personal economic interests and the family and the public authority of the state" to further justify and strengthen the resultant hegemony.⁶

Gramsci states that societies owe their existence to the reinforcement of "domination" or force and "hegemony"; he defines "hegemony" as "consent to 'intellectual and moral leadership'". Consequently, social orders are established in human societies with certain groups and institutions trying their utmost to maintain social boundaries and rules by dint

⁵ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1977) 108.

⁶ Douglas Kellner, *Cultural Marxism and Cultural Studies*, 8 April 2010
<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/>.

of their power and domination, while certain other institutions, for example religion, school, media, pave the way for the consent to the dominance and established hegemony that a specific, desired order may be maintained. Besides, patriarchal societies owe their hegemony and intramural dominant position of the hard sex “through the institutionalizing of male supremacy” over their respective womenfolk.⁷

As a correlative to the concept of hegemony, Louis Althusser (1918—90), a French Marxist theoretician, introduced *repressive structures* whereby he means such institutions that manifest, time and again, force of the state to ensure state power; such institutions include the standing army, the police force, the judicial system, prison houses, and other law enforcement agencies. All such institutions or *repressive structures* underpin power of the state. In parallel with these institutions, a network of other social institutions also remain active and try “to secure the internal consent of its citizens”; Althusser calls such social groups as *Ideological State Apparatuses* or ISAs; they include the educational institutions, the religious institutions, the electronic and print media, the political parties and institutions, the social circles—clans, *biradarries*, family⁸—and art and literature; as most of these institutions are managed and supervised by the state, they could be

⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸ One of the hallmarks of the Third World politics is the parochialism of only a few communities; resultantly, the interest aggregation is carried on unilaterally and most of the national resources are moulded in favour of only the chosen few; while rest of the populace go to hell in a handbasket. In parallel with the same practice, in Mexico too “[s]ince the 1970s, kinship ties have become more important as a common denominator of those who attain top positions of political power. Increasingly, such people are born into politically prominent families that have already produced state governors, cabinet ministers, federal legislators, and even presidents. And these political families are increasingly interconnected: At least one- third of the government officials and politicians interviewed by one researcher for several books on the Mexican political elite were related to other officials, not counting those related through marriage and the traditional rite of *compadrazgo* (becoming a godparent to a friend’s child). Family connections can give an aspiring political leader a powerful advantage over rivals.”(Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 493). Similarly *biradarries* or clannish ties is an important determiner in Pakistani politics; data analysis of the general elections of 1977, 1985, 1988, 1990, 1993, 1997, and 2002 indicates that the ratio of clan-supported candidates is 74 per cent and “*biradari* is always stronger than political fidelity” (Dr. Mughees Ahmed quoted by Dr. Farrukh Saleem in Daily *The News*, Islamabad, January 23, 2011).

considered as a pack of hired agents in the hands of government: all these institutions try to nourish, propagate, and inculcate a specific ideology—"a set of ideas and attitudes" that pursue specific prescribed aims of the state and discourage to challenge "the political *status quo*".⁹ Thus, the *repressive structures* and *Ideological State Apparatuses* join hands and facilitate hegemony of the chosen few.

Most of the regimes owe their existence to the presence of such *repressive structures* and *Ideological State Apparatuses*. A lot of examples could be cited in the present-day political world wherein both the *repressive structures* and the *Ideological State Apparatuses* are invariably (mis)used to ensure the hegemony of the chosen few over the masses; for example, first, when the Indian masses, in the pre-divided India, resented the draconian measures suggested by the then Imperial Legislature to curb the revolutionary movements in India, the English rulers resorted to a heavy dose of force; in order to protest against the Rowlett Bills, passed on March 18, 1919, a group of Indian peoples gathered in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar on April 13, 1919; the administration first tried to disperse them, then Brigadier General Dyer ordered his rifle-men to shoot the demonstrators; resultantly, about 379 persons were killed and more than thousand were injured.¹⁰ Second, a new task force of Federal Security Force (FSF) was created in October 1972 during the regime of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in Pakistan; 18,563 men were recruited in FSF within two years and they were equipped with semi-automatic rifles, short Machine Guns, mortars, hand grenades, and transport vehicles. Though the network of FSF was established with the avowed objective to assist the civil administration and

⁹ Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Manchester University Press, 2002) 164.

¹⁰ S.M. Burke and Salim Al-Din Quraishi, *The British Raj in India: A Historical Review* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2004) 179, 205—08.

the police, “soon [it] turned out to be a kind of private force at the disposal of the ruling party which was used against the political opponents and the dissidents within the ruling party. By the time the Bhutto era came to an end (1977) the FSF had become quite a notorious organization”.¹¹ Third, in order to protest against the too much restrictions, inflation, and the official corruption, about one million citizens staged a demonstration, in defiance of the government imposed Martial Law, at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The mass protest continued for several days; to quell the dissidents and to disperse the demonstrators, “on June 4, 1989, the troops attacked and the tanks smashed barricades and soldiers fired into the crowds, causing a death toll running into thousands”.¹² Fourth, it has been reported that the incumbent Bangladeshi government has established a paramilitary force, known as the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), against their political dissidents; the international human rights organizations describe it as “a government death squad”. It has been reported that the Rapid Action Battalion has committed hundreds of extra-judicial killings since its establishment in 2004. Most of the victims of the Battalion are government opponents and a minister has declared that “the government will need to continue with extrajudicial killings”.¹³ Fifth, recently when the masses looked askance at the 40 years long regime of Maummar Qaddafi in Libya and they rose against the autocrat, he resorted to a ruthless use of force killing thousands of his rivals. Sixth, during the recent Arab uprisings when online activists planned for a “Day of Rage” and a “Saudi March 11 Revolution” against the monarchy on March 11, 2011, hundreds of Saudi security forces surrounded the proposed avenue of the protest—the Olaya

¹¹ Hasan Askari Rizvi, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan, 1947—1997* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2000) 216.

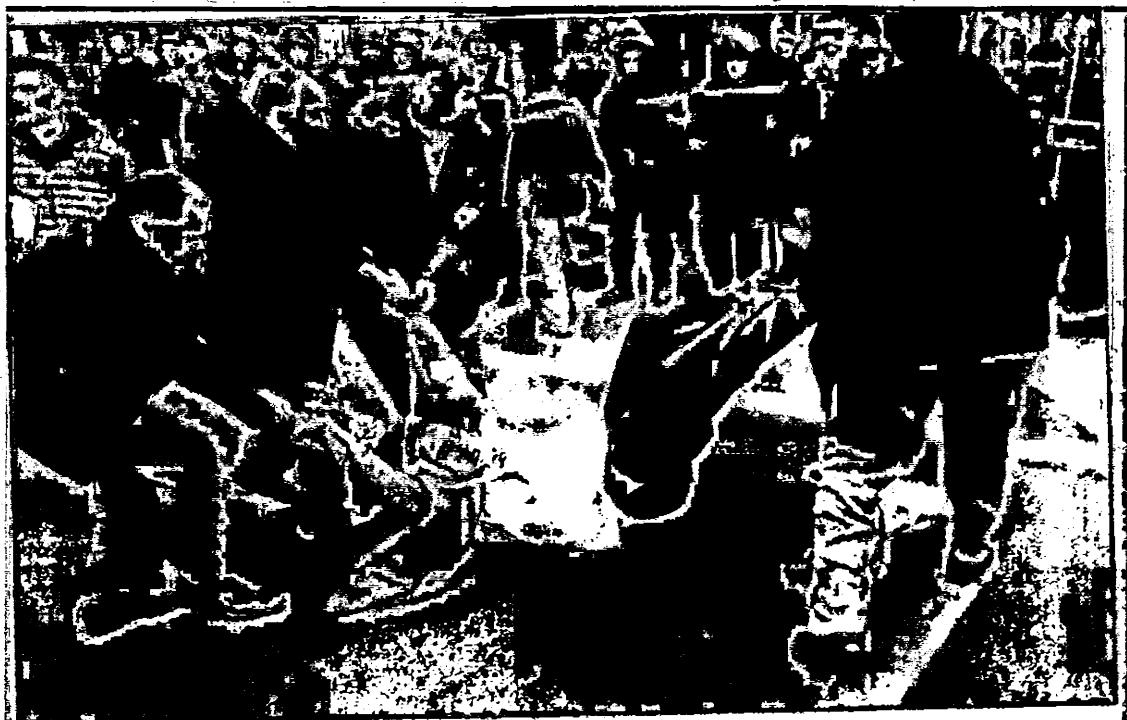
¹² Prof. Dr. Muhammad Sarwar, *Comparative Governments, Political System of China* (Lahore: Ilmi Kitab Khana, 2001) 510.

¹³ Daily Dawn, Karachi, December 25, 2010.



CAIRO: Police clash with demonstrators during the protest on Tuesday—AP

Repressive Structures in action to repress: (above) in order to maintain and prolong the 30 years old hegemony of the strongman, Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian security forces want to quell the demonstrators. Photo by daily *Dawn*, Karachi, January 26, 2011. (Below) on January 26, 2011, just 15 days before his ouster on February 11, plainclothes police arrest a demonstrator in Cairo; riot police could also be observed in the background. Photo by daily *The News*, Islamabad, January 27, 2011.



commercial centre in the capital Riyadh—and they did not allow the protesters to gather therein; later in a state-run television address to the Saudi nation, King Abdullah praised and thanked the Saudi security forces that they cope up with the protesters; he ordered the Saudi interior ministry to recruit 60,000 more security personnel with the vivid object to handle any exigency in future in an effective manner. Hence, the King enhanced his *repressive structure* in order to curb the activities of those who try to endanger his hegemonic position. In the same televised address he described his security forces as “the hitting hand against [those] whoever considers undermining the nation’s security and stability”.¹⁴ Thus *the repressive structures* are nothing but “the hitting hand” of those who want to ensure their hegemony over others. All these six examples indicate that whenever the hegemonic position of a ruler(s) was/is challenged they resort to the *repressive structures*; usually the law enforcement agencies are (mis)used as the *repressive structures* to curb those who look askance at the hegemonic positions of the dominant.

Similarly, a lot of institutions could be observed in the surrounding world wherein they try to inculcate certain ideas to pave the way for the hegemony of the chosen few. Such institutions are explained as *the Ideological State Apparatuses* and they are invariably (mis)used to procure the tacit consent of the masses for the prolongation of the hegemonic position of the chosen few. The following two examples, *inter alia*, from the current world situation amply illustrate the case in point. First, in December 2010 the parliament of Kazakhstan passed a resolution that meant to skip the pre-scheduled presidential elections of 2012 and 2017 and hereby to extend the tenure of the incumbent President Nursultan Nazarbayev till 2020. Nazarbayev is in Presidency since 1991 and

¹⁴ Daily *The News*, Islamabad, March 12,19, 2011.

the proposed plan would ensure his position for three decades. On the other hand, critics say that in reality the masses enjoy no say in the election of their president, the system is devoid of any political competition, and political rivals are muzzled. An analyst says that “[w]hat is being called an extension of the presidential mandate is in fact the creation of a life-long presidency”.¹⁵ Second, interestingly enough the same drama was staged in the Yemen's parliament shortly before the ongoing uprisings in the Arab world: in early January 2011 the Yemen's parliament kicked off constitutional amendments that aimed to ensure President Abdullah Saleh's rule for life. The amendment process was backed by 170 parliamentarians out of a total of 301; all the supporting members belonged to Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC). Ali Abdullah Saleh is in power since 1978 and the GPC-dominated parliament aimed to ensure his unlimited tenure, though hitherto



DEMONSTRATION: Yemeni opposition wearing orange sashes with the slogan "No for life presidency, no for hereditary succession" protest outside the parliament building in Sanaa. PHOTO: AFP

Ideological State Apparatuses (mis)used: on January 1, 2011, the Yemeni Parliament passed a resolution whereby President Ali Abdullah Saleh was facilitated to rule for life; the Yemeni Parliament is dominated by the President's party—General People's Congress. 170 parliamentarians, out of 301, okayed the resolution. Photo by daily *The Express Tribune*, Islamabad, January 2, 2011.

¹⁵ Daily Dawn, Karachi, December 30, 2010.

the Yemen's constitution stipulated the presidency only to two consecutive terms, of seven years each.¹⁶ It could be concluded that in both the cases, the state law-making institutions, part of *the Ideological State Apparatuses*, were used to facilitate and justify the hegemonic positions of the strongmen concerned.

Hence, in normal situation, when there is no overt threat, *the Ideological State Apparatuses* are used to procure the consent of the masses or their deputies for the justification of the hegemonic position of the chosen few; but when their hegemonic position is jeopardized and there is an imminent threat, they recourse to *the repressive structures*.

As most of the world religions justified hegemony of one class over the other, on one pretext or another, that is why Marx described religion as “the opium” of the populace: “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people”.¹⁷ Marxists say that religious injunctions distract people’s attention from the tools and instruments that strengthen the oppressors’ hegemony and consequently their dominant position is prolonged. Time and again, members of the dominant class resort to such injunctions of religion and try, to take support therefrom, to justify and maintain their hegemonic position; thus, the ruling-class could use religion as one of the instruments that enhance their oppression. Religion is a tool in the hands of the ruling class that is used for social control; it justifies their exploitation and the established social stratification. Some religions of the world corroborate these Marxist reservations; for example the caste-ridden society of India is being justified by Hindu religious tenets; in Mediaeval Ages the kings and emperors, both

¹⁶ Daily *The Express Tribune*, Islamabad; daily *The News*, Islamabad; daily *Dawn*, Karachi, January 2, 2011.

¹⁷ Harlambos and Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 5th ed., 436.

in the East and the West, would justify their hegemony on the basis of their self-proclaimed “Divine Rights” or “*Zulli-e-Elahi*”; similarly, the Egyptian Pharaohs combined the attributes of both god and king in one person.¹⁸

Marxist theories and ideas have been mainly derived from the work done on historical patterns of human civilizations. Marxist critics espoused the theory that “social history” is nothing but a record of the invariable friction between “the ruling classes and the oppressed, working classes”. During a Marxist interpretation of a piece of literature, a critic deals the piece from socio-economic, as well as historical, perspectives. A Marxist interpretation probes and takes into consideration various socio-economic circumstances, their mutual effects, and the net result on a society represented by setting of the literary piece. It underscores how “the smaller class of capitalists and the larger laboring class” are poles apart from each other as far as their socio-economic conditions are concerned and how the under-consideration literary piece mirrors or reflects such conditions of disparity between the-haves and the-have-nots.¹⁹

The important tenet of Marxist criticism, whether it is political or literary, is to do away with racial hegemony or the hegemony of one class over the other. According to Marxist critics, economic determinism brings about class conflict which is the staple diet of Marxist criticism. Ralph Miliband writes that class conflict is the hallmark of Marxist criticism. He elaborates the point in these words:

[in Marxism] the focus, always is on *class* antagonism and *class* [not my italics] conflict. This does not mean that Marxism does not recognize the existence of other kinds of conflict within societies and between them—ethnic, religious, national, etc. but it does consider these rivalries, conflict and wars as directly or indirectly derived from,

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 436—37.

¹⁹ Cynthia Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002) 79—80.

or related to, class conflicts; whether it is right to do so is not here the point. The fact is that in Marxism this is the essential, primary focus.²⁰

2.2 Methodology

As far as the methodology or *modus operandi* of the thesis is concerned, *The Pearl* has been thoroughly analysed as a text in the light of Marxist theory. Various corroborative evidence from the works of prominent Marxist critics have been provided in this regard.

The text has been minutely and thoroughly analyzed both at micro-level as well as at macro-level. Since Marxist literary critics assume that a critic should expose the hidden conflict among various characters or classes, and the latent contents should be brought to the fore and “then relate the *covert* [not my italics] subject matter of the literary work to basic Marxist themes, such as class struggle, or the progression of society through various historical stages, such as, the transition from feudalism to industrial capitalism”²¹, in this study the researcher has tried to illustrate how Marxist literary theory should be applied on a text. As an exemplification of the *modus operandi*, only four points have been selected from *The Pearl* and they have been briefly analysed in the following lines:

First, “hegemony”, taken from Gramsci’s *Prison Notebooks* (1929—35), is one of the basic terms of Marxist criticism; it denotes, in its extended sense, the dominance of one social class by the other; the exploitation of one class by the other. Racial hatred, accompanied by a strict class segregation, is a powerful undercurrent in the story of *The Pearl*; Kino’s race has been restricted to a ghetto, while the doctor’s folk live in the

²⁰ Ralph Miliband, *Marxism and Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978) 18—19.

²¹ Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Manchester University Press, 2002) 167.

palatial “city of harsh outer walls and inner cool gardens where a little water played and the bougainvillaea crusted the walls with purple and brick-red and white”²²; consequently, both the classes constitute a society that is characterized by class friction, antagonism, and the concept of the dominated and the dominant; when such antagonistic classes encounter each other, the concept of hegemony precipitates. Herein, in *The Pearl*, one class wants to throw away the yoke of the others hegemony, while the other wants to maintain its hegemonic position either by hook or by crook; about the dominant status of the doctor’s race, the narrator writes that they “for nearly four hundred years had beaten and starved and robbed and despised Kino’s race, and frightened it too”²³. Second, Raymond Williams says that in a human society certain “inequalities in means” exist that lead to the realization of hegemony²⁴. These inequalities in *The Pearl* could be easily discerned whenever the narrator juxtaposes the domestic lives of Kino and that of the doctor. For example, Kino satisfies himself only with beans and corn-cakes while the doctor is provided with a “supper of chocolate and sweet cakes and fruit”.²⁵ Third, gender-based domination and exploitation is another aspect of hegemony in *The Pearl* : at a point Kino gives a sound beating to Juana, his spouse; he kicks her and she falls down, “[h]e hissed at her like a snake, and Juana stared at him...like a sheep before the butcher”.²⁶ Fourth, the church, the Father, the school, wherein only the children of the bourgeoisie could afford to learn, represent what have been termed as *Ideological State Apparatuses* (ISAs) by Althusser (1918—90), a prominent French Marxist theoretician. ISAs are such institutions, political parties, religious groups, churches, the family, media,

²² *The Pearl*, 7.

²³ *Ibid.*, 8.

²⁴ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 108.

²⁵ *The Pearl*, 29.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 51—52.

art and literature which try to nourish a pro-bourgeois ideology. For example when the Father comes to know that Kino has found a precious pearl, he goes to his hut and appreciates the decision of Kino and Juana that they will be now ceremoniously married in the church; the Father says to them: "It is pleasant to see that your first thoughts are good thoughts,"²⁷ Thus, in a Capitalist society most of the individuals think that they "are freely choosing what is in fact being imposed upon [them]".²⁸

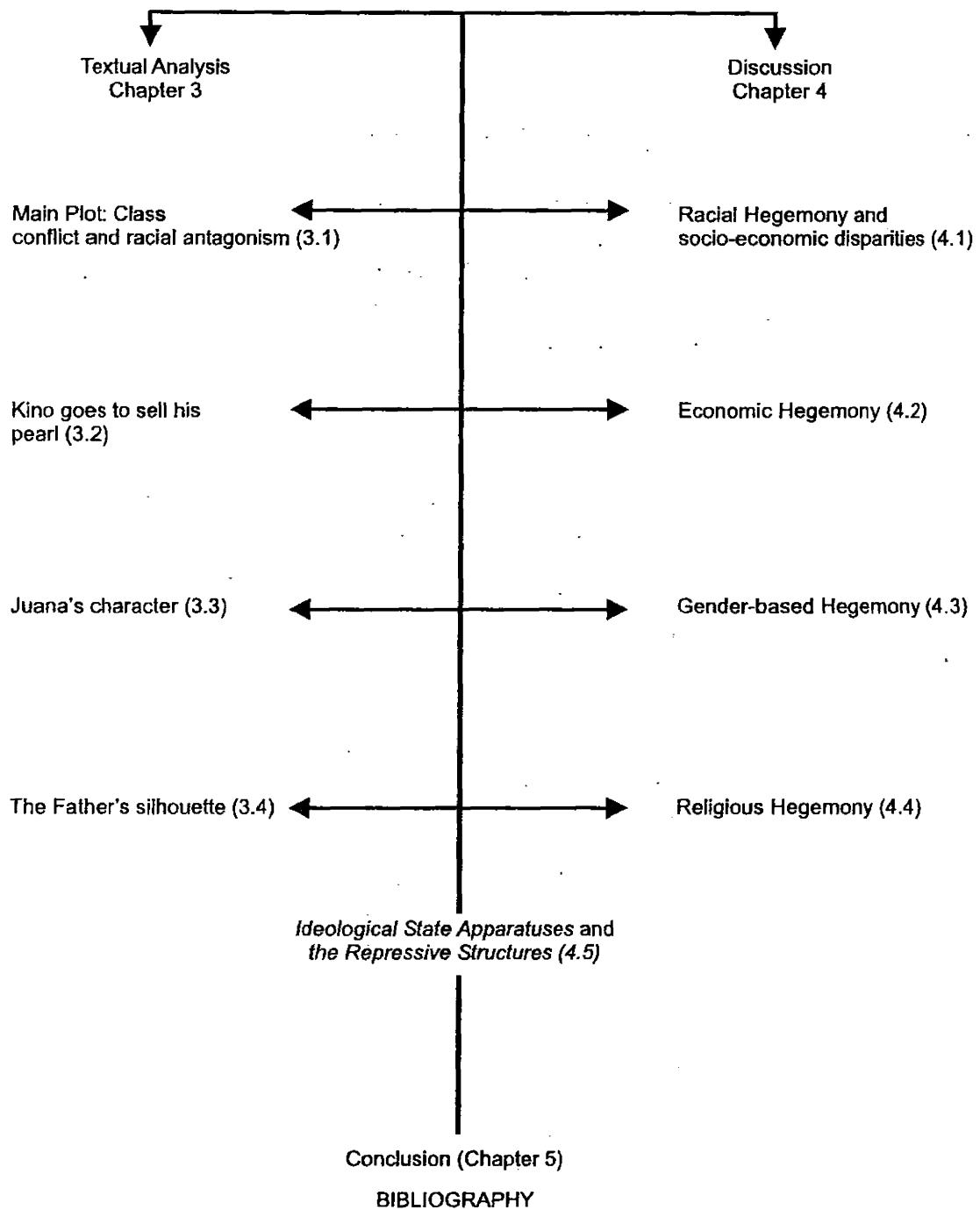
It has been tried to illustrate all the relevant episodes of the *novella* in the light of the works of the prominent Marxist critics, such as Raymond Williams (his views about hegemony and the distinction of base/super-structure in *Marxism and Literature*), Terry Eagleton (his views about the socio-historical significance of a text have been given on p. 11), Althusser (a section, 4.5, has been dedicated to his *Ideological State Apparatuses* and the *Repressive Structures*), and, on top of all these, Karl Marx himself. All the things have been viewed as contents of the Pandora Box of Capitalism.

An illustrated form of the *modus operandi* has been given on p. 29.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.

²⁸ Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*, 164.

The Pearl (1945)
John Steinbeck



7th - 8/15/8

A bird's eye view of the work through a simple model / *modus operandi*

CHAPTER 3

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

This chapter focuses on *The Pearl* as a text; it is a micro-analysis of the text. It has been divided into four sections; each section identifies a paradigm of hegemony. Several examples have been taken from *The Pearl* and they have been elaborated in the light of Marxist criticism.

3.1 Main Plot: Class Conflict and Racial Antagonism

The very first sentence—Kino awakened in the near dark—of the *novella* introduces the protagonist, and, at the same time, comments on his personal position and describes his surroundings or *environs*. Here Kino's awakening foretells that henceforward there will be his awareness, his sensitivity, and his resistance to get himself liberated from the forces of darkness. “[T]he near dark” indicates that the protagonist has been fettered by the forces of darkness or evil, and these forces of darkness or evil will frequently haunt the mini-society of La Paz. Inaugurating the *novella* with the name of his protagonist indicates that the narrator wants to give paramount importance to him and to align himself with him. Kino's awakening indicates the presence of hegemonic forces from which he wants to liberate himself and his kith and kin. But in the second sentence the narrator says that “[t]he stars still shown...” which indicates that there will be some rays of hope while waging his crusades against the hegemonic forces and their oppressive structures.

Two classes have been juxtaposed in the *novella*: Kino's class and that of the doctor. The former class occupies most of the *novella* and has been graphically pictured; besides

Kino and his spouse, Juana, Juan Tomas, Kino's brother, Apolonia, Kino's sister-in-law, Coyotito, Kino's son, their neighbours, the beggars, the doctor's servant—all belong to this class. Though it is the oppressed, the dominated, the deprived, the down-trodden class of the mini-society of La Paz, its graphic description indicates that Steinbeck has aligned himself with them and he wants to highlight their miseries. On the other hand, the doctor is the only representative of the latter class, the bourgeoisie. Though he has been supplemented with the Father and the crafty pearl-dealers, it is only the doctor who has rolled the snow ball, who directly encounters Kino, and who pours oil on Kino's burning flames. This doctor is the tip of the iceberg that has subjugated and shackled Kino's race "for nearly four hundred years". The doctor stands for the dominant, oppressor class. When Kino's son, Coyotito, is stung by a scorpion and Juana suggests that they should call in the doctor, the narrator introduces the doctor and portrays his arrogance in these words:

A wonderful thing, a memorable thing, to want the doctor. To get him would be a remarkable thing. The doctor never came to the cluster of brush houses. Why should he, when he had more than he could do to care of the rich people who lived in stone and plaster houses of the town?¹

Thus even before the readers encounter the doctor, the narrator foretells that he is indifferent, arrogant, and insolent towards the residents of the "brush houses". The doctor is more interested, the narrator implies, in the "care of the rich people"; consequently, it could be inferred in the very first chapter that the super-structure of the society concerned in *The Pearl* is pro-bourgeoisie and class-ridden.

Now when Kino is in distress and tries his utmost to dispel the poisonous effect of the scorpion on his only son, this untoward incident also stirs his neighbours. When the

¹ John Steinbeck, *The Pearl* (New Delhi: UBS Publishers, Distributors Ltd., 2000) 6.

mishap crops up, it becomes a neighbourhood affair, turns from the individual to social or communal, as the narrator says: “The thing had become a neighbourhood affair”.² In other words, it is a small-scale development from individualism to socialism or communism; a transformation from “I” to “we”. This leads to the phalanx idea vehemently supported by Steinbeck in some of his works, especially *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). Phalanx idea underscores an active powerful “drive” or “spirit” that remains active on behalf of a group or community composed of individuals; this powerful “drive” or “spirit” possesses a “separate will” and it could be considered as an “entity” or being in itself. The individual members or species of the respective group or community do their bit to accomplish the will of the operative “drive” or “spirit”; consequently, a shift from “I” thinking to “we” thinking is brought about.³

Cynthia Burkhead comments on the separate existence of both the communities in these words:

The idea of community is established early in the story. When Coyotito is bitten by the scorpion, the villagers follow Kino and Coyotito to town to seek the doctor's help. They are not merely onlookers. If the doctor will treat Coyotito, then the community members can hope for his care in the future. If not they will have confirmation that, as members of the poor diver-community, they will not receive his medical care.⁴

Hence, the narrator turns the minor incident of a scorpion bite into a communal “affair” and that indicates his bent of mind. Later on when they are going there to the nearby town, along with other neighbours, to hire the services of the doctor, the narrator has highlighted the sharp contrast between the life styles of the two classes in these words:

² *Ibid.* , 7.

³ Cynthia Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002) 6.

⁴ *Ibid.* , 110.

They came to the place where the brush houses stopped and the city of stone and plaster began, the city of harsh outer walls and inner cool gardens where a little water played and the bougainvillaea crusted the walls with purple and brick-red and white. They heard from the secret gardens the singing of caged birds and heard the splash of cooling water on hot flagstones....⁵

The passage indicates how “the brush houses” of Kino and his neighbours stand in sharp contrast with that of the doctor’s locality. The latter enjoys almost every amenity of a comfortable life while the former have been restricted to a ghetto wherein only corn cakes and pulque are their staple diet. Though “the town represents authority and civilization [as a Centre, in contrast to the Periphery of the brush houses] to the villagers, but in reality, it presents an evil, the cheating and abuse of authority that make it, ironically, uncivilized”⁶ and callous in its treatment towards the deprived. Karsten has metaphorically explained the different colours of the bougainvillaea in the following words:

... the blossoms of the bougainvillaea are symbolic in colour: the purple can represent royalty or imperial rank, the conquistadores⁷ of the Spanish kings whose descendants are the oppressors of Kino’s people, or it can symbolize the heinous sins of prejudice and avarice; brick-red can represent the extent of the hatred of the town for the community or, more likely, the blood that has been shed in the subjugation of the Indians; white, although it very often suggests innocence and purity, can also symbolize cowardice or can refer to the white vestments of the clergy, specially the white cassock or surplice of some of the mendicant orders in early Mexico, and to the royalist, conservative, anti-Indian political viewpoint.⁸

Thus different colours in the bourgeoisie’s gardens reflect their mentality and the intramural texture of their society. Moreover, the “harsh outer walls” have been considered as “offensive barriers” against the Others—the down-trodden, the-have-nots; these walls indicate the bifurcation of the society on the bases of social stratification;

⁵ *The Pearl*, 7.

⁶ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 102.

⁷ Conquistador means any of the Spanish conquerors who invaded Mexico, Peru, or other parts of Latin America in the sixteenth century.

⁸ Ernest E. Karsten, Jr., “Thematic Structure in *The Pearl*”, published in *The English Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (Jan. 1965) 3—4, published by National Council of Teachers of English.

behind these walls “the economic, social, and cultural oppression of the community by the town is” carried on⁹, (for a detailed discussion of the current “vast disparities among Mexico’s regions and between rural and urban areas” see pp. 92—93 of this work). The narrator proceeds from the general, from the description of the doctor’s locality, to the particular and finds the same amenities there inside the doctor’s house. He portrays a vivid picture of the doctor’s house and says:

The scurrying procession came at last to the big gate in the wall of the doctor’s house. They could hear the splashing water and the singing of caged birds and the sweep of the long brooms on the flagstones. And they could smell the frying of good bacon from the doctor’s house.¹⁰

It could be noted that the practice of keeping birds in cages is common in the locality and the doctor toes the line of his brethren in this regard. Here the cages are used to imprison little innocent birds; in other words, the cages are used for the exploitation and oppression of birds; hence, by extension, this is in line with the subjugation and domination of mankind; such apparatuses and tools exploited for the subjugation and domination of the have-nots have been described as *Ideological State Apparatuses* (ISAs) by Marxist critics. A description of ISAs will be made in section 4.5 of this work.

There in the doctor’s town, when they were heading towards the doctor’s house, across a church, some beggars were there near the church. These beggars have been used as choral characters and the narrator records, through their eye, the wretched condition of the “indigent” couple:

[The beggars] were great experts in financial analysis, looked quickly at Juana’s old blue skirt, saw the tears in her shawl, appraised the green ribbon on her braids, read the age of Kino’s blanket and the thousand washings of his clothes, and set them down as poverty people...¹¹

⁹ *Ibid.* , 3.

¹⁰ *The Pearl*, 8.

¹¹ *Ibid.* , 7.

It could be noted from the above excerpt that the narrator wants to highlight the wretched, miserable conditions of the have-nots of La Paz; thereby he wants to reveal how they have been deprived of the opportunities and amenities of modern easy-peasy life. A little later, the same beggars' opinion about the doctor has been given in these words:

And they [the beggars] knew the doctor. They knew his ignorance, his cruelty, his avarice, his appetites, his sins. They knew his clumsy operations and the little brown pennies he gave sparingly for alms. They had seen his corpses go into the church.¹²

The doctor, a representative of the bourgeoisie, has been portrayed as a square pig in a round hole: he is indolent, careless, miser, irresponsible, incompetent, and apathetic towards his patients. Moreover, since the doctor is a part of the super-structure of the society, the above-mentioned excerpt is a tirade or out-burst of the narrator against the bigwigs of the Mexican society. The introduction of the beggars as choral characters, in order to express their opinions about Kino, Juana, and the doctor, is a device whereby the narrator wants to anticipate or dispel any allegations of pre-conceived, personal bias against the doctor and his race, that is, he does not give the impression of an omniscient narrator and wants to ensure his self-effacement.

Later on, when Kino and his people are there at the doctor's gate and the servant goes inside to inform his boss about the waiting procession, the narrator portrays the doctor's luxurious life in these words:

In his chamber the doctor sat up in his high bed. He had on his dressing-gown of red watered silk that had come from Paris, a little tight over the chest now if it was buttoned. On his lap was a silver tray with a silver chocolate pot and a tiny cup of egg-shell china, so delicate that it looked silly when he lifted it with his big hand, lifted it with the tips of thumb and forefinger and spread the other three fingers wide to get them out of the way. His eyes rested in puffy little hammocks of flesh and his mouth drooped with discontent. He was growing very

¹² *Ibid.*, 8.

stout, and as his voice was hoarse with the fat that pressed on his throat. Beside him on a table was a small Oriental gong and a bowl of cigarettes.¹³

This minute and thorough observation of the doctor and his furnished-room indicates three points: First, the doctor leads a luxurious life, he enjoys all the amenities of a modern life. His belongings include precious articles, for example "high bed", "dressing-gown" made of "red watered silk", "a silver tray", "a silver chocolate pot", a cup "of egg-shell china", an "Oriental gong", and "a bowl of cigarettes". All these articles stand in sharp contrast with the wretched, miserable life of Kino who cannot afford the charges for treatment of his "first-born" baby and is short of even the bare necessities of life. By this detailed description of the doctor's luxurious life, the narrator wants to highlight the wide gulf between the life styles of both the classes. Second, the doctor has been described, once again, in a derogatory manner: his "big hand", his "puffy little hammocks of flesh" around his eyes, "his mouth drooped with discontent", his "hoarse" voice, and his fatness—all these things imply his care-free, indolent life; his obesity indicates that he is thriving upon the means of others. The doctor stands for a whole class which further its causes at the expense of others. He personifies a Capitalist system wherein wealth concentrates in the hands of a few, while the rest go to the wall. In such a Capitalist system one could observe that some wine and dine, without any scarcity, at one street of the city while at the other street of the same city there will be starvation and undernourishment.¹⁴ Like other Third World countries, "Mexico entered the twenty-first century with huge social and economic problems, a highly unequal distribution of income; a growing poverty population, with at least half of all Mexicans living below the

¹³ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴ George Bernard Shah, quoted in *Socialism Ya Islam* by Khursheed Ahmed (Karachi: *Maktabai Charagh-e-Rah*, 1969) 246.

official poverty line¹⁵ characterize the national economy of the polity. Third, as most of his belongings are imported ones, this alludes to world-wide Capitalism and, in the long run, imperialism. Herein the mention of Paris reminds one of the colonial centre, one of such centres during the first half of the twentieth century, wherefrom they tried to exploit the resources of the Third World, as that of Mexico itself in Latin America. Besides, now when the doctor is here in La Paz, face to face with the “little Indians”, it is nothing but an encounter of the Centre with the Periphery; it could be easily perceived that, as usual, the former has got the upper hand upon the latter. Not only that most of the luxury items of the doctor’s room have been imported from the imperial Centre but the doctor himself had once been a part of that hegemonic structure. The narrator further states:

The doctor had once for a short time been a part of the great world and his whole subsequent life was memory and longing for France. ‘That,’ he said, ‘was civilized living’—by which he meant that on a small income he had been able to enjoy some luxury and eat in restaurants.¹⁶

This means that just as the imperial powers maintained their hegemony over the distant nations of the world, in the same manner the doctor, and his class, wants to maintain and strengthen their hegemony, here on a local level, over the down-trodden of La Paz. When the doctor considers his past life in Paris as a “civilized living”, it corroborates the Eurocentric notion that the European dominant nations were superior and more civilized as compared to the coloured dominated nations. Thus, the hegemony and dominant position of one class, here in La Paz, is a small replica of the hegemony and imperial designs of European powers world wide.

¹⁵ Gabriel A. Almond, G. Bingham Powell, Jr, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*, 8th ed. (New Delhi: Pearson Education, 2004) 469.

¹⁶ *The Pearl*, 9.

When the servant enters the doctor's chamber to inform him about the plight of the waiting "little Indians", the brief conversation between the servant and the boss is worth quoting:

The servant: "It is a little Indian with a baby. He says a scorpion stung it."

The doctor: "Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for 'little Indians'? I am a doctor, not a veterinary."

The servant: "Yes, Patron."

The doctor: "Has he any money?...See if he has any money!"¹⁷

The remarks of both the servant and the doctor are disparaging; both describe Kino and his people as "little Indians"; not only that, the doctor further dehumanizes them and is arrogant enough to treat the innocent baby. His looking into the matter of money reifies¹⁸ and objectifies his services. About this reification process, an analyst writes in his write-up: "Bourgeois society has reduced all relations to money relations, to the extent of even turning the human ability to labour into a commodity, governed by the same laws of exchange as other commodities."¹⁹ Besides, the brief encounter between Kino and the servant at the main gate is also noticeable as far as language varieties are concerned:

Kino spoke to him in the old language. 'The little one—the first-born—has been poisoned by the scorpion,' Kino said. 'He requires the skill of the healer.'

The gate closed a little, and the servant refused to speak in the old language.²⁰

The above-mentioned two pieces of conversations reveal the socio-economic background of the characters. As "conversation is a socially structured activity"²¹ it is

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁸ *Reification* has been derived from Latin which means "thing-making". In common parlance, *reification* implies to handle an abstract idea as a concrete thing. In Marxist criticism this term was elaborated by Georg Lukacs (1885—1971), a Hungarian literary critic; according to him, Capitalism is invariably recreating its structures and associated social relationships in such a way that they are invested with certain authority and inevitability (*History and Class Consciousness*, 1923).

¹⁹ M. Abul Fazal, *daily Dawn*, Karachi, January 16, 2011.

²⁰ *The Pearl*, 9.

obvious that Kino's idiolect refers to the residual culture.²² As "the servant refused to speak in the old language", it means that Kino and his folk are considered as inferior and un-civilized. When Kino is at the threshold of the doctor's gate waiting for the latter's response, the narrator juxtaposes and probes the strained relations of both the classes in no uncertain terms:

This doctor was not of his people. This doctor was of a race which for nearly four hundred years had beaten and starved and robbed and despised Kino's race, and frightened it too, so that the indigene came humbly to the door. And as always when he came near to one of this race, Kino felt weak and afraid and angry at the same time. Rage and terror went together. He could kill the doctor more easily than he could talk to him, for the doctor's entire race spoke to Kino's entire race as though they were simple animals.²³

Herein, the class antagonism becomes apparent and surfaces from the latent state to the manifest, from the covert to the overt position. This excerpt speaks volumes about the friction between the two classes; one class does not consider the other on a par, rather they are treated like "simple animals". Another imperialist writer of the early twentieth century calls such dominated peoples as "wild... sullen peoples/ Half-devil and half-child".²⁴ Consequently, such social and racial distances pave the way for the domination of one nation or class by another, and such domination facilitates and ensures the concept of hegemony.

In the above-mentioned excerpt, Steinbeck highlights the two rival races or communities, instead of the individual members thereof; such emphasis on "group rather than the individual" could be easily perceived in his *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). In this novel the Weedpatch camp has been portrayed as a ghetto; the camp has been demarcated

²¹ David Silverman, *The Practice of Social Research*, 10th ed. ; ed. Earl Bubbie Belmont, 375.

²² The notion of residual culture and dominant culture has been expounded by Raymond Williams, and has been elaborated on p. 41 of this work.

²³ *The Pearl*, 8.

²⁴ Rudyard Kipling's *The White Man's Burden*, (1899).

by a fence that has confined movements of the poor inmates of the camp. Herein Steinbeck not only resents the helplessness or indifference of the government as far as "the laws and lives of the people" are concerned but he also decries the deplorable lives of the inmates, the unemployment, and the fact that almost all of them live on the breadline. Only a fraction of the inmates of Weedpatch is on job but they extract very low wages; their children are embarrassed when they are labeled as "Oakies"; resultantly, they quit school at their tender ages; the tenets of social democracy can not satisfy the Joads to live as human beings; consequently, most of them leave the camp in search of earning their livelihood.²⁵

The description of Kino's canoe denotes that it is a society wherein the individuals, especially the down-trodden, are constantly obsessed by the ghost of earning a livelihood: "It [the canoe] was at once property and source of food, for a man with a boat can guarantee a woman that she will eat something. It is the bulwark against starvation"²⁶.

Hence, even marital relations are based on reification or objectification; and one of the couple will have to guarantee the other, otherwise they are threatened by the menace of "starvation". Apart from the confrontation and hegemony of the bourgeoisie, Kino and his race have to thwart in the potential danger of "starvation".

The narrator has earmarked an entire chapter (Chap. 2) to describe in detail how Kino went, when the doctor refused to treat his baby, to sea and there he succeeded to find a valuable pearl. Describing the movements and struggle of Kino so minutely and from such close quarters refer to the fact that Steinbeck is on tenterhooks to dawn on

²⁵ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 69—70.

²⁶ *The Pearl*, 13.

the readers how the down-trodden and impoverished parents work hard to pay the doctor's fee.

When Juana, Coyotito's mother, tries to apply some seaweed as a home-made herbal medicine on Coyotito's swollen shoulder, it again refers to the concept of "residual culture". The narrator states:

She [Juana] gathered some brown seaweed and made a flat damp poultice of it, and this she applied to the baby's swollen shoulder, which was as good a remedy as any and probably better than the doctor could have done. But the remedy lacked his authority because it was simple and did not cost anything.²⁷

3.1.1 Kino Finds a Precious Pearl

When the servant perceived that Kino, while they were at the doctor's gate, has no money to pay for the doctor's services, the doctor refused to treat Coyotito; afterwards when Kino succeeded to find "the Pearl of the World", the doctor suddenly changed. When Kino found "the Pearl of the World", the news spread like a wild fire in La Paz. When the doctor heard the news, he said: "He [Kino] is a client of mine. I am treating his child for a scorpion sting."²⁸ This indicates that the doctor wants to establish ties with Kino only on economic terms; otherwise, he is completely indifferent to Kino and his race. Now from the very outset, when he perceived that Kino is going to be a rich man, the doctor wants to grind his own axe, to bag something, rather the precious pearl, "the Pearl of the World", from Kino either by hook or by crook; as they say the wolf changes only his coat, not his character. This behaviour and mentality of the bourgeoisie indicate how they are impatient to further their individual interests, they want to deprive others even of their rare, meagre, and scarce possessions; to enrich

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

themselves at the cost of others; not only that, they want to bag from them and to transfer the alleged looted money to the offshore accounts, for at the same time “the doctor’s eyes rolled up a little in their fat hammocks and he thought of Paris. He remembered the room he had lived in there as a great and luxurious place”²⁹.

Now when Kino has come across a precious pearl, “the Pearl of the World”, he plans to start anew his life; he considers that henceforward a new leaf would be turned over in their life, they would be able to enjoy the amenities of life, and they would be able to unfetter themselves from the shackles of poverty. When his brother Juan Tomas asks: “What will you do now that you have become a rich man?”, Kino categorises his priorities in the following order:

- 1: “We will be married—in the church.”
- 2: “We will have new clothes.”
- 3: He wanted to buy “a harpoon to take the place of one lost a year ago”.
- 4: “A rifle, [p]erhaps a rifle.”
- 5: “My son will go to school....My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and will know writing.”³⁰

All the priorities show how Kino lacks in the basic necessities of life and how he longs for them. Kino wishes had he been married in church in a ceremonious manner as a common Christian is done, had he afford new clothes and dress himself according to the weather conditions, had he could replace his lost harpoon that he might be able to catch more and more fish for the sake of his livelihood, had he been able to purchase a rifle in order to defend himself in case of any danger, had he was rich enough to have his son admitted in a school, but the major hindrance in the fulfillment of these aspirations was his impoverished situation and his penury. Now when he has found “the Pearl of the World”, he would be able to satisfy all such desires and would be able to

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 19—20.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

lead his life like the opposing bourgeoisie. Unlike the doctor's luxurious life, most of the aforesaid priorities of Kino are nothing but a life's minimum requirements for which he pines away.

3.1.2 The Doctor Visits Kino's Hut

When the news about Kino's precious pearl came to the doctor, he, on the following night, prepared himself to visit Kino's brush house on the pretext of treating Coyotito. Though the doctor was present in his luxurious chamber when Kino and his folk visited him, at that morning, to hire his services for the treatment of the scorpion bite, notice how the doctor distorts the facts: "I was not in when you came this morning. But now, at the first chance, I have come to see the baby"³¹.

Herein, now the doctor is on the threshold of Kino's brush house, an encounter like that of the morning when Kino was on the former's threshold; the encounter of the two characters represents the encounter of the two classes, the oppressed and the oppressor, the dominated and the dominant, the have-nots and the-haves; consequently, the encounter has been characterized, like the previous one, with bad blood between both the classes. The narrator portrays the scene in these words: "Kino stood in the door, filling it, and hatred raged and flamed in back of his eyes, and fear too, for the hundreds of years of subjugation were cut deep in him"³².

It is noticeable how the narrator highlights the "hatred", the rage, and the "fear" of the have-nots for the-haves; not only this, he also traces their past relations and mentions "the hundreds of years of subjugation" of one class at the hands of another.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 26.

³² *Ibid.*

Steinbeck portrays the psyche, in line with the technique of *stream of consciousness*, of his protagonist and views that the bitter memory of his subjugated past “cut deep” him.

The narrator wants to highlight how Kino feels humiliation and deprivation at the maltreatment of the bourgeoisie. When Kino hesitated to allow the doctor to treat his son and told him: “The baby is nearly well now,”³³ the narrator pictures the doctor in the same sarcastic manner: “The doctor smiled, but his eyes in their little lymph –lined hammocks did not smile.”³⁴ The doctor persuaded Kino and forewarned him, in a crafty manner, against the possible danger of a scorpion bite; consequently, Kino allowed him, though unwillingly, to treat his baby. About the convincing, crafty manner of the doctor and the simple-mindedness and credulous nature of Kino, Steinbeck writes: “He [Kino] was trapped as his people were always trapped, and would be until, as he had said, they could be sure that the things in the books were really in the books”³⁵.

Again, when the doctor persuades and succeeds to trap Kino it is not the latter’s individual problem, the narrator has made it a communal problem, a class problem when he writes: “as his people were *always* [my italics] trapped”. Moreover, here, as in many other places, diction of the narrator—trapping, means fooling, to ensnare—indicates that he resents the abject, marginalized position of Kino and “his people”; he wants them to be liberated from the fetters of the bourgeoisie and to become self-sufficient, self-confident people that keep abreast of the latest changes in human society and equipped with knowledge.

After the doctor’s first visit, the narrator portrays the same picture of the predators and the prey in the nearby estuary:

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

Out in the estuary a tight woven school of small fishes glittered and broke water to escape a school of great fishes that drove in to eat them. And in the houses the people could hear the swish of the small ones and the bouncing splash of the great ones as the slaughter went on.³⁶

Here, the two schools of fishes could be symbolically interpreted as the two classes, antagonistic and at daggers drawn, in the outer human society. Like the dominant class of the nearby human beings, the “school of great fishes drove in to eat them [the small fishes]”. In the eco-system of the estuary too one class dominates, and exploits the other class, one class flourishes at the cost of the other, one class has established its hegemony over the other; in this small eco-system, “the small ones” are entirely at the mercy of “the great ones”, just like Kino and his people are vulnerable to the atrocities and humiliations of the opposing race. The above-mentioned excerpt indicates that the wide socio-economic disparities obsess the mind of the narrator and, by implication, hegemony of one class over the other is the recurring motif of *The Pearl*.

Steinbeck again aligns himself with Kino, and his folk, when he duly alludes to the miseries of the down-trodden, the have-nots: “...sickness is second only to hunger as the enemy of poor people,”³⁷ (fact-finding surveys reveal that some deadly diseases claim most of the lives only in the low-income countries, see foot-note No. 6 in Chap. 4 for statistical details. Hence, it could be inferred that he wants to underline the socio-economic miseries of the poor and to contrast them with the luxurious and care-free life of the bourgeoisie. Moreover, it is obvious that the prime motive for the doctor’s unexpected visit is to gain something of Kino’s sudden wealth; hence, it could be concluded that “bourgeois society [has] reduced all relations to money relations, to the

³⁶ *Ibid.* , 29.

³⁷ *Ibid.* , 30.

extent of even turning the human ability to labour into a commodity, governed by the same laws of exchange as other commodities".³⁸

When the doctor visits twice Kino's hut, he becomes an intruder for the womenfolk who had gathered there beside "Juana to try to give her aid if they could and comfort if they could not,"³⁹. As the doctor enters, "[h]e scattered the old women like chickens"⁴⁰; the doctor disrupts their small social gathering; not only that, the womenfolk of the-haves-nots have been de-humanised and marginalized to the status of "chickens". This incident implies that, first, the presence of capitalists in the ranks of the oppressed will lead to the disruption and scattering of the latter; thereby they would be unable to muster their collective courage, cope with the rival hegemonic class, and to unfetter themselves from the shackles of Capitalism; second, the bourgeoisie do not treat the-haves-nots on par with human beings; they always try to subjugate them to their heavy handedness.

When Kino mentions his pearl, the doctor simulates ignorance and says: "You have a pearl? A good pearl? I had not heard of it. Do you keep this pearl in a safe place? Perhaps you would like me to put it in my safe?"⁴¹ The doctor's remarks are noticeable as he considers himself, as all capitalists do, as the best and proper manager of valuables; besides, the doctor reminds one of financial establishments founded by the bourgeoisie who convince the rank and file to deposit their savings therein (see pp. 47—48).

³⁸ M. Abul Fazal, *daily Dawn*, Karachi, January 16, 2011.

³⁹ *The Pearl*, 30.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 31.

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After the doctor's visit at night, Kino wants to keep the pearl in a safe place. Juana asks: "Who do you fear?" Kino replies: "Every one."⁴² It reminds one the pre-state man of Hobbes who is involved in a ceaseless war against every one. Hobbes says:

...And therefore if any two men desire the same thing ... they become enemies; and in the way to their end (which is principally their own conservation, and sometimes their delectation only) endeavour to destroy or seduce one another ... such a war as is of every man against every man.⁴³

Although Kino has found "the Pearl of the World", his inner world is still restless and he considers himself, thanks to the cut-throat competition associated with Capitalism, unsafe and insecure: "He felt alone and unprotected and scraping crickets and shrilling tree frogs and croaking toads seemed to be carrying the melody of evil."⁴⁴ It means that the opposing forces, out without any restrictions, in a Capitalist system would constantly haunt a person to grab his/her assets either by hook or by crook.

When Juana, sensing the imminent, potential danger associated with the pearl, suggests that they should "throw it back into the sea" because "[i]t has brought evil"⁴⁵, Kino ignores her escapism. Replying to her exhortation, the narrator has presented Kino in a manly manner: "This is our one chance. Our son must go to school. He must break out of the pot that holds us in."⁴⁶ Kino has been portrayed as a true hero who wants to unshackle himself and his folk from the shackles of various social institutions. He rightly perceives the importance of knowledge; therefore, he wants that his "son must go to school".

⁴² *Ibid.*, 32.

⁴³ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. , 1914), Chap. 6.

⁴⁴ *The Pearl*, 25.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* , 34.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Realizing the soothing effects of adequate money for the needs of the victims, the narrator states: "Its [the pearl's] warm lucence promised a poultice against illness and a wall against insult. It closed a door on hunger."⁴⁷ In this sentence Steinbeck has mentioned the three main distressing aspects of a poor man's life: illness, insult, and hunger. All the three factors make their life a plight for them. Giving such minute and thorough analysis of Kino's life, Steinbeck has highlighted almost every aspect of his socio-economic life; he wants to become a champion or an advocate for the causes of the oppressed, the down-trodden, the have-nots and the disadvantaged. As Williamson writes:

Steinbeck's characters are not the wealthy people of Mexico's aristocracy or the newly rich miners and moneyrunners of California's boom days, but, rather, they are the homeless, the migrant workers, the poor fishermen, and the farmers.⁴⁸

Cynthiya Burkhead writes that as Steinbeck himself was one of the down-trodden, he portrayed his characters from first hand knowledge and his ability to "capture the experiences of common" man is out of question. In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Steinbeck said in no uncertain terms that his sympathies are there with the common man; further he elaborated that he "did not write for the critics but for the common people, those who truly needed it".⁴⁹ When Kino, along with his next of kin, decides to go to the nearby city in order to sell his pearl, he prepares himself for the "historic moment". Steinbeck portrays him again in a manly, heroic manner:

Kino put on his large straw hat and felt it with his hand to see that it was properly placed, not on the back or side of his head, like a rash, unmarried, irresponsible man, and not flat as an elder would wear it,

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* , 35.

⁴⁸ Williamson, *John Steinbeck, The Pearl, Full Review*, 1.

⁴⁹ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 12, 20, 28.

but tilted a little forward to show aggressiveness and seriousness and vigour.⁵⁰

In this extract the protagonist has been presented as a responsible, serious, cautious, virile, and vigorous person, instead of “a rash”, “irresponsible”, “elder” character and hence a passive one; at the same time, the narrator mentions his “aggressiveness” and “vigour”, such qualities imply that he would do any thing to bring about a change in his impoverished, enervated and wretched life, to combat the rival forces of a Capitalist system, and to liberate himself and his kith and kin from “the pot that holds [them] in”. Moreover, his “aggressiveness” and “vigour” foretell the imminent ambush between Kino and his rival social forces. Thus, it could be said that the latent antagonism between Kino and the doctor depicts the tense relations between the two communities; such deep-rooted animosity, mostly on the basis of the-haves and the deprived, between various communities is the *leitmotif* of Steinbeck’s works: *In Dubious Battle* (1936) the resentment of the labour-force, mostly farmers, has been depicted against the *Torgas Valley Growers Association* that is supported by the local bigwigs. Jim Nolan is the protagonist of the novel. When Jim finds himself, like Kino, in a drab existence he joins hands with the labour organization and becomes a confidant of Mac who is a veteran Communist Party leader; both Jim Nolan and Mac strive to instigate the labour-force for a strike. Herein too, Steinbeck emphasizes the operative force or drive of phalanx and its consequences; one of the consequences is that Jim Nolan is shot dead and Mac describes him as the Saviour of his people to summon their courage up. Similarly, in *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) Tom Joad, protagonist of this novel, has been depicted as a champion for the rights of the Joads. Tom establishes an organization of the labour-force that is led by

⁵⁰ *The Pearl*, 39.

Jim Casey; thus, the emphasis has been shifted from individual to group life. In fact, for his pictorial scenes, taken from the lives of the down-trodden, *In Dubious Battle* and *The Grapes of Wrath* Steinbeck was labeled as a Communist, the charge he vehemently denied. *The Wayward Bus* (1947) is another fiction work of Steinbeck wherein he “presents Juan Chicory as a Christ figure, addressing the needs of the ignored, facing temptation, and finally acting as a saviour to his people”.⁵¹ Therefore, it could be deduced that main plot of *The Pearl*, as in the case of the above-mentioned three novels, depicts two rival communities; one wants to maintain its hegemony, the other wants to resist it.

3.2 Kino Goes to Sell His Pearl

When Kino’s intentions about the selling of his precious pearl were known, all the pearl dealers in the city became alert; everyone considered himself a self-styled stakeholder in the forthcoming bargain. Steinbeck writes: “...when the day had come, in the offices of the pearl buyers, each man sat alone with his little black velvet tray, and each man rolled the pearls about with his finger-tips and considered his part in the picture”⁵². They prepared themselves to bag Kino’s pearl at the cost of the lowest minimum price. Now there in the market, only one wealthy person owns almost the whole pearls’ dealing shops; he has many agents or assistants employed in different shops to give the impression of many dealers dealing without any collusion with each other against the clients. On the other hand, these employees of the same invisible tycoon micro-manage all the process of a bargain to persuade a fisherman for the lowest possible price for their pearls. About the economic manoeuvres of the pearl-dealers, a part of the free-market, the narrator states:

⁵¹ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 5, 6, 11, 19, 22, 69, 70.

⁵² *The Pearl*, 36.

It was supposed that the pearl buyers were individuals acting alone, bidding against one another for the pearls the fishermen brought in. And once it had been so. ...Now there was only one pearl buyer with many hands, and the men who sat in their offices and waited for Kino knew what price they would offer, how high they would bid, and what method each would use.⁵³

When Kino found the precious pearl, the double game associated with open market started, the gruesome aspects of free-market came to the fore, the ghostly frightful faces of capitalist elite appeared on the scene, the hands and feet of *laissez-faire* became active to bag “the great Pearl of the World” either by hook or by crook. The narrator has amply portrayed this system:

Kino has found the Pearl of the World. In the town, in little offices, sat the men who bought pearls from the fishers. They waited in their chairs until the pearls came in, and then they cackled and fought and shouted and threatened until they reached the lowest price the fisherman would stand. ... And when the buying was over, these buyers sat alone and their fingers played restlessly with the pearls, and they wished they owned the pearls. For there were not many buyers really—there was only one, and he kept these agents in separate offices to give a semblance of competition. The news came to these men, and their eyes squinted and their finger-tips burned a little, and each one thought how the pattern could not live forever and someone had to take his place. And each one thought how with some capital he could get a new start.⁵⁴

Thus the above-mentioned pearl-dealers have been employed by the few capitalist elite to grab the money of the poor, simple-minded fishermen. It indicates that most of the affairs of a free-market are pre-arranged among the dealers against the clientele; most of the things are managed behind the scene; a lot of wheeling and dealing is carried on; thereby the emerging bourgeoisie manage to concentrate in their hands more and more wealth of the society; consequently, this micro-managing leads to their economic hegemony. Even their employees, mostly hired from the rank and file, extract only nominal wages from their wealthy bosses; for the narrator states:

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

And although these men [employees of the tycoon] would not profit beyond their salaries, there was excitement among the pearl buyers, for there was excitement in the hunt, and if it be a man's function to break down a price, then he must take joy and satisfaction in breaking it as far down as possible.⁵⁵

Alive to such economic manoeuvres of the free-market Juan Tomas, Kino's brother, forewarns the latter: "You must be careful to see they do not cheat you."⁵⁶

3.2.1 Cockroach in the Court of Fowls

When Kino, accompanied by his next of kin and neighbours, proceeds towards the town, Cynthia Burkhead writes it seems that he steps in a new, unfamiliar, strange, and unwelcoming world, a "world of dealing and deceit". In contrast to the first quiet and calm morning of the *novella*, in Chap. 1, this second morning, in Chap. 4, is full of excitement—excitement for both the inmates of the brush houses and the waiting pearl-dealers in the town market. Kino and his family members wore untimely their Sunday best—untimely because they had prepared them for some holy rites of the Church but they could not afford the participation therein for a long time. On the other hand, though the pearl-dealers would not fish something out for themselves as they were the employed persons of the same tycoon, "but their excitement comes from the idea of the game, the hunt in which Kino is the prey".⁵⁷ When Kino, along with his brethren, approached the city market of pearl buyers, the narrator portrays the pre-arrangement of the market in these words:

The news of the approach of the procession ran ahead of it, and in their little dark offices the pearl buyers stiffened and grew alert. They got out papers so that they could be at work when Kino appeared, and they put their pearls in the desks, for it is not good to let an inferior pearl be seen beside a beauty.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* , 37.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* , 39.

⁵⁷ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 104.

⁵⁸ *The Pearl*, 41.

The pearl dealers started to simulate their hectic business life and to dissemble the gloomy atmosphere of the economic downturn; this indicates how in a *laissez-faire* system of free-market, the main tenet and pre-requisite of Capitalism, the capitalist elite manoeuvres to hoodwink the workers or customers.

Within the pearl-dealer's small cabin the dialogue between the seller and the buyer reflects the universal, invariable rules of free-market:

The Pearl-dealer: Good morning, my friend. What can I do for you?
Kino: I have a pearl.

The Pearl-dealer: you have a pearl. Sometimes a man brings in a dozen. Well, let us see your pearl. We will value it and give you the best price. [Kino shows him the pearl and he inspects it] I am sorry my friend.

Kino: It is a pearl of great value.

The Pearl-dealer: You have heard of fool's gold. This pearl is like fool's gold. It is too large. Who would buy it? There is no market for such things. It is a curiosity only. I am sorry. You thought it was a thing of value, and it is only a curiosity.

Kino: It is the Pearl of the World. No one has ever seen such a pearl.

The Pearl-dealer: On the contrary, it is large and clumsy. As a curiosity it has interest; some museum might perhaps take it to place it in a collection of sea-shells. I can give you, say, a thousand pesos.

Kino: It is worth fifty thousand. You know it. You want to cheat me.

The Pearl-dealer: Do not blame me. I am only an appraiser. Ask the others. Go to their offices and show your pearl—or better let them come here, so that you can see there is no collusion. Boy, [He calls his page to call on the other dealers.] Boy, go to such a one, and such another one and such a third one. Ask them to step in here and do not tell them why. Just say that I will be pleased to see them.⁵⁹

It is noticeable how the string-pullers of *laissez-faire* micro-manage the affairs of free-market, manoeuvre behind the scene, and act in unison. Steinbeck has depicted the same oppressive system in the portraiture of the grasping bankers and the deceitful car dealers in his *The Grapes of Wrath*. They strengthen each other against the have-nots and try their utmost to swindle out the latter out of their petty earnings. Their collective action of “one”, “such another one”, “and such a third one” implies that they are chips of the same block, that is, bricks of the same Capitalist system that

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* , 42—44.

cement each other. Such collusions and mutual collaborations enhance the hegemony of the-haves over the-have-nots.

When the three other pearl-dealers came their former colleague said: "I have put a value on this pearl. The owner here does not think it fair. I will ask you to examine this—this thing and make an offer. Notice, [now to Kino] I have not mentioned what I have offered"⁶⁰.

Now the cockroach awaits the court-decision of the fowls: as the matter was pre-decided, and pre-arranged, all the three dealers tried to under-value Kino's precious pearl and hence they rejected it on one pretext or another. When the first dealer examined it, he "cast it contemptuously back into the tray" and said: "Do not include me in the discussion. I will make no offer at all. I do not want it. This is not a pearl—it is a monstrosity."⁶¹ The second pearl-dealer examined the pearl under magnifying glass and said: "Better pearls are made of paste. I know these things. This is soft and chalky, it will lose its colour and die in a few months."⁶²

Kino was "trapped as his people were always trapped"⁶³ and he became dejected when all his great expectations were dashed to pieces. The third dealer dealt the seller leniently and offered a price which was far short of the first price of thousand pesos: "One of my clients likes such things. I will offer five hundred pesos, and perhaps I can sell it to my client for six hundred."⁶⁴ But Kino smelt a rat, he took his pearl and rejected the price. So, as they say, in a court of fowls, the cockroach never wins his case. Though the original pearl-dealer increased his offer upto fifteen hundred, Kino

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 45.

rejected and cried: "I am cheated. My pearl is not for sale here. I will go, perhaps even to the capital."⁶⁵ Thus, thanks to their pre-arranged collusion, it seemed that "[e]ach of the three knew the pearl was valueless".⁶⁶ Some of the neighbours thought, later at night, that it was a pre-decided matter: "But suppose they had arranged it before?"⁶⁷ Others replied: "If that is so, then all of us have been cheated all of our lives."⁶⁸ In such a system one class always deceive, on one pretext or another, the other(s) to maintain their hegemony. More succinctly, such deceitful relations between the dominant and the dominated have been described by Juan Tomas, Kino's brother, in these words: "We do know that we are cheated from birth to the overcharge on our coffins. But we survive. You have defied not the pearl buyers, but the whole structure."⁶⁹

Almost the same sordid aspect of free-market could also be observed in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939); herein the car dealers try their utmost to buy at a minimum price from the starvation-stricken who are forced to sell their belongings that they might buy something for food; on the other hand, the same car dealers "sell higher than is fair to those" migrants who have de-territorized in search of their livelihood.⁷⁰ Thus, in both *The Grapes of Wrath* and in *The Pearl* Steinbeck wants to expose the callous disregard, on part of the capitalists, for the miseries of the have-nots; both the novels decry the racketeering nature of the free-market wherein the racketeers unilaterally flourish without any compunction.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 45—46.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁷⁰ Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (New York: Penguin, 1992)

3.2.2 Kino is attacked

Juan Tomas views “the whole structure” of the class-ridden society as their rival force that will take vengeance on them in various forms of Nemesis. One such form of the Nemesis, inflicted by “the structure”, is the plight of starvation. When Juan Tomas alludes to the potential dangers, lying in ambush for Kino, the latter retorts: “What have I to fear but starvation?”⁷¹ The former abruptly replies that starvation is such a danger in their impoverished social life that “[t]hat we must all fear”.⁷² Scarcity of food items is one of the problems that are often created by the string-pullers of the open market operating under the umbrella of *laissez-faire*; most of the profiteers keenly awaits for such periods of shortage wherein they thrive at the expense of others.

As Kino had “defied not the pearl buyers, but the whole structure”, first form of the Nemesis followed late that night: out side his brush house he was ambushed by unidentified persons; Kino suffered multiple lacerations on his face. As it has already been told:

The news [of the precious pearl] stirred up something infinitely black and evil in the town; the black distillate was like the scorpion, or like hunger in the smell of food, or like loneliness when love is withheld. The poison sacs of the town began to manufacture venom, and the town swelled and puffed with the pressure of it.⁷³

Resultantly, as it was expected, Kino felt that “...the evil was all about, hidden behind the brush fence, crouched beside the house in the shadow, hovering in the air”.⁷⁴

⁷¹ *The Pearl*, 47.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.

Now the “manufactured venom” of the “defied structure” had surfaced itself; they tried to deprive Kino of his only opportunity; from their covert antagonism they came to attack the possessor overtly; this is the first armed conflict in the *novella*. As the pearl-dealers had pre-arranged the affair behind the screen, earlier that morning, in the same manner the unidentified attackers managed to ambush Kino behind the screen of darkness. So they say that Capitalism is the exploitation of man by man.

Juana, in the guise of a mediator, urges on Kino that he should throw away the pearl because it seemed a sinister one, an ominous one for them but Kino gives no heed; rather the narrator has presented him as a steadfast, determined, and uncompromising hero who is dedicated to his cause: “No. I will fight this thing. I will win over it. We will have our chance. No one shall take our good fortune from us. Believe me. I am a man.”⁷⁵ It is noticeable that Kino, as a mouth-piece of the narrator, insists upon the provision and utilization of his opportunities: earlier he says: “My son must have a chance,”⁷⁶ and perceiving the greedy and grabbing nature of the rival forces he aptly adds: “That is what they are striking at.”⁷⁷ Thus, he declares: “We will have our chance.”

Then again in the wee small hours of next morning they chased Kino alongside the river; Kino was attacked but he retaliated on time and stabbed one of the attackers. The incident testifies how in a free-for-all game *homo homini lupus*, that is, man is a wolf to his fellowman. How they were impatient to bag the precious pearl? When Kino was knocked down “[g]reedy fingers went through his clothes, frantic fingers searched him, and the pearl, knocked from his hand, lay winking behind a little stone

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

in the pathway. It glinted in the soft moonlight.”⁷⁸ Later on, the pearl was picked up by Juana. This was the second armed conflict between Kino and his rival social forces. Kino stabbed to death one of the prowlers, though he himself received serious injuries and became unconscious. Later on, when Kino came to his senses, Juana suggested that they should escape from the site as he has murdered a man; Kino said something in his defence, but Juana, taking the true pulse of the corrupt “defied structure”, says: “Do you remember yesterday [when the pearl buyers tried to hoodwink them]? Do you think that will matter? Do you remember the men of the city? Do you think your explanation will help?”⁷⁹

Though Kino attacked the person saving his own life, he attacked defensively, his attack was a pre-emptive one, Juana rightly believed that a cockroach will never never win his case in the court of fowls. Now life became, as Juan Tomas has forewarned, unbearable for the indigent couple; “There was nothing to do but to save themselves.”⁸⁰ They damaged Kino’s only canoe thereby to cut off his means of escape and carried out an arson attack on his brush house; they set ablaze his house and it was burnt to ashes. Now, to save his life, Kino became a displaced person and started to seek an asylum for himself and his small family. He, along with Juana and the baby Coyotito, embarked upon a troublesome journey, mostly on the sly, towards the north to save themselves from the enemies.

Thus, when all is said, we could observe that in a system or “structure” characterized by the hegemonic position of one class upon the other the ruthless game of witch-hunt is a routine matter; the cut-throat competition, for valuables, for

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 53.

authority, for a dominant position, engages the minds of the inhabitants for most of the time; in order to satisfy their nefarious designs some of them become, in the absence of any restricting hands, predators to chase their fellows as their prey. In a similar drive against the political dissidents “hundreds of leftist militants” in Mexico disappeared from the scene during the 1970s and 1980s.⁸¹

Before we proceed to the next section, it would be pertinent to describe the fidelity of Juana all along the line and to highlight her plight as a representative of womenfolk.

3.3 Juana's character

Juana has been portrayed as an embodiment or paragon of fidelity, sympathy, steadfastness, and patience from the outset. The narrator has taken round about five days (and nights) from their conjugal life; therein Juana stands by her spouse through every thick and thin; she is only second to Kino, the protagonist of the *novella*, as far as characterization is concerned. She, like all other women of the Third World countries, is a submissive wife who carries out what is said by her husband.⁸² In some of the qualities, for example remarkable endurance, patience, calmness, domestic household work, she even outshines Kino; she supplements or compensates for the qualities that have been denied to Kino; consequently, she really becomes his better

⁸¹ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 483.

⁸² Though such submissive, subjugative positions, and the associated plights, in a patriarchal society, which is being criticised and dubbed as phalocracy or phallocentric system by Feminists, is the staple diet of Feminist criticism, resentment of deprivation or oppression of one's fellows is common to both Marxism and Feminism; Marxism focusses on the strained relations of classes—the-haves and the-have-nots, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—Feminism stresses, wholly solly, on gender discrimination; one advocates economic equality, the other champions gender equality; one wants to throw away plutocracy, the other wants to do away with phalocracy; one resists the hegemony and domination of the bourgeoisie, the other resents and decries the hegemony and domination of the opposite sex—both are up in arms about the heavy-handedness of their fellows but one wants to do away with Capitalism, the other wants to puncture the patriarchal structure.

half. When we go through the *novella*, we could divide the role of Juana into two categories: First, Juana as a housewife or house-keeper performing her domestic indoor duties in the capacity of a wife and mother; second, Juana in crises doing her best to support her husband and look after her baby. But ironically enough, in both the cases she becomes a victim of the gender-based hegemony that is so rampant in the Third World. In the following lines it has been tried to give a detailed description of each in the case of Juana.

3.3.1 Juana as a Household Woman

At the outset of the *novella* Juana has been portrayed as a housewife or house-keeper and an extremely caring mother. Aware of her domestic indoor duties, she rises early in the morning. When Kino awoke, at the first day of the story, he observed that she

lay beside him on the mat, her blue head-shawl over her nose and over her breasts and around the small of her back. Juana's eyes were open too. Kino could never remember seeing them closed when he awakened. Her dark eyes made little reflected stars. She was looking at him as she was always looking at him when he awakened.⁸³

This is the first description of Juana in the *novella*. From this excerpt we can deduce four points that are invariably common in the womenfolk of the Third World's patriarchal societies: First, she "lay beside him on the mat" refers to their fidelity; they undergo through the ups and downs of life with their husbands without any ifs and buts; they resign themselves to their lots with them and become models of contentment and patience; they do not enjoy any say to influence the choice of their life-partners (see pp. 99—101 of this work for different practices of marriage and some of the facts and figures in Pakistan); they are treated as mere dumb and mute

⁸³ *The Pearl*, 1.

creatures and are engaged to their proposed fiancé; thenceforward, after marriage they endeavour willy nilly all the hardships in their in-laws. Second, “Juana’s eyes were open too. Kino could never remember seeing them closed when he awakened,” indicates that Juana is a dutiful and responsible wife; she is aware, irrespective of many husbands, to her domestic duties and alive to her responsibilities as a wife and a mother. Metaphorically speaking, her open eyes imply that she is more far-sighted, and this will be amplified later on, and has been gifted with qualities of both head and heart as compared to Kino. Her open eyes allude to the vigilance and the resultant hectic activities of feminist movements in the twentieth century. Third, “Her dark eyes” and “reflected stars” reveal the slip of the pen, *lapsus calami*, on part of the narrator that could be ascribed to his sub-conscious notions of male-chauvinism: instead of “bright” eyes he describes them as dark, and they are not reflecting stars; “star-like sparkle in their skies”⁸⁴, but “reflected”—removed from reality, fake stars, hollow, without any intrinsic value; all the three words—dark, little, reflected—connote a negative sense; they betray seamy aspects of a woman’s personality. Fourth, “She was looking at him as she was always looking at him,” denotes the time-testing and praiseworthy fidelity of Juana as a life-partner or as a Penelope. It foretells that Juana does her utmost to look after Kino whole-heartedly; besides, it foretells that Juana will be there side by side with Kino and she will do her bit to defend him from his rival forces. This indicates that a trustworthy wife could play a great role both in the indoor and out-door life of a husband; that is why the Mexicans say that the house does not rest upon the ground, but upon a woman. In fact, she will be a confidante of the protagonist.

⁸⁴ Robert Herrick (1591—1674) in *To Dianeme*.

Juana shoulders most of the household chores without any grudges. On the first day of the story she gets up silently, "almost soundlessly. On her hard bare feet she went to the hanging box where Coyotito slept, and she leaned over and said a little reassuring word."⁸⁵ She is sensitive enough to avoid any disturbance in her husband's rest, so she gets up "almost soundlessly"; in the very beginning she has been portrayed as a humane and considerate character. Moreover, she is a caring and loving mother and rears her baby in a becoming manner. Her "reassuring word[s]" indicates that her presence has a wholesome effect on the life of Kino and she will be used to ease and calm down the perturbed events of the plot. We could infer therefrom that one's better half could bring about comfort and warmth in one's life.

Early in the morning, Juana prepares breakfast for her family. In line with the traditions of rural areas of Mexico, she could be observed at "the grinding stone where [she works] the corn for the morning cakes."⁸⁶ It indicates the hard laboring work of Juana. The same situation could be observed in the rural societies of south Asian countries wherein the womenfolk lead a miserable existence: they have to fetch clean drinking water from afar on their tender, fragile heads, to provide grass and fodder for their cattle, to clean the stables, to work in their fields, and, to crown it all, to provide fuel, in the shape of brush-wood or dry sticks and twigs for fireplace. All these duties seem unwholesome and inappropriate for the fragile constitution of a woman; this is an inconsideration and injustice on the part of men towards them.

⁸⁵ *The Pearl*, 2.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

Juana carries on her maternal duties whole-heartedly; apart from her household chore she nurses Coyotito and looks after his health; while Kino, her husband, has tacitly committed himself only to the outdoor duties, mainly earning their livelihood. At the first morning of the story “Juana took Coyotito out of his hanging box and cleaned him and hammocked him in her shawl in a loop that placed him close to her breast”.⁸⁷

Thus unlike the modern world prams or baby-carriages wherein our infants grow away from the warmth and comfort of a mother’s lap, Juana brings up her baby “close to her breast”. In fact, at the beginning of the *novella*, or more precisely, in their normal life, Juana outshines Kino; she is more active, more briskly, more patient, agile, and far-sighted while Kino is characterized by a tunnel-vision. Like all other patriarchal societies of the Third World, in the mini-society of our *novella* it is the prerogative of menfolk to dine first; accordingly, Kino breakfasted first while Juana ate later: “When Kino had finished, Juana came back to the fire and ate her breakfast”⁸⁸ at the same morning. Not only that, when some unidentified enemies attacked Kino on the first night and he suffered multiple lacerations on his head and face, the same Juana did her bit to provide first aid on time: “She worked quickly, crooning as she moved about. She dipped the end of her head-shawl in water and swabbed the blood from Kino’s bruised forehead”⁸⁹.

Thus she is not only a caring mother, but she is also a loving and kind wife who tries her best to sooth her husband in troubles. Later on, when Kino goes to the town market to sell his pearl to the dealers, at sometime “[h]e felt a little tugging at his

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

back, and he turned and looked in Juana's eyes, and when he looked away he had renewed strength".⁹⁰ Thus, she is a repository of strength, courage and affection for both Kino and Coyotito in the capacity of a wife and a mother respectively.

In the domestic life of Kino and Juana the traces of gender-based dominance could be perceived analysing the routine activities of the couple individually: early in the morning, Juana rose, went to Coyotito, lit the fire, ground the corn, prepared breakfast, nursed Coyotito, made herself up, breakfasted; while Kino rose, viewed the scene outside and breakfasted; during this long stretch of morning "[t]hey had spoken once, but there is not need for speech if it is only a habit anyway".⁹¹ As it is said talking to one another is loving one another, the speechless atmosphere refers to some lacunae universal to all patriarchal societies; it implies the lack of understanding and mutual disharmony.

3.3.2 Juana in Crises

When she observed a scorpion on the hanging box of Coyotito, she became impatient for the safety of her baby, "[u]nder her breath [she] repeated an ancient magic to guard against such evil, and on top of that she muttered a Hail Mary between clenched teeth".⁹² Not only that, when the scorpion stung the baby, on one side, the violent, vengeful nature of the hard sex came to the fore and "Kino beat and stamped the enemy until it was only a fragment and a moist place in the dirt";⁹³ on the other hand, the benign arms of the mother stretched out for "Juana had the baby

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 44—45.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 5.

in her arms now. She found the puncture with redness starting from it already. She put her lips down over the puncture and sucked hard and spat and sucked again...”⁹⁴

This indicates how Juana is pragmatic and anxious for the safety of her baby. Here the vengeful, hard nature of Kino foretells the imminent violent incidents and bloodshed; while the motherly interruption of Juana and her efforts to detoxify the baby allude to her moderate but dominated role. As a reaction to the untoward incident the responses of both the husband and the wife are conspicuous: the former is characterized for his vengeance and uncompromising nature, while the latter is laudable for her benign, loving nature and her pragmatism. In fact, both the sexes response in a stereotypical manner that lead to the realism in characterization of the narrator. The narrator has summarized all her qualities, both in domestic normal life, as well as in crises, in the following paragraph:

Kino had wondered often at the iron in his patient, fragile wife. She, who was obedient and respectful and cheerful and patient, could bear physical pain with hardly a cry. She could stand fatigue and hunger almost better than Kino himself. In the canoe she was like a strong man.⁹⁵

It is clear from the above excerpt that it is a surprising thing even for her husband that how she surpasses him in such praiseworthy qualities; she could be considered as a prototype of women in patriarchal societies wherein they are lorded it over by their menfolk; therein they lead their lives under the unquestioned hegemony of their menfolk; therein such “patient, fragile”, “obedient and respectful” womenfolk, not only wives, are supposed not to question the conventional do’s and do not’s solely devised by their male kith and kin; otherwise they would have to face the music. In most of the cases this hegemony often turns into violence and oppression. Though

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* , 6.

hunger, under-nourishment, and poor or almost no medical facilities are common miseries in the Third World countries, womenfolk are their frequent and prime victims;⁹⁶ while *sans merci* menfolk are completely unaware of such sordid aspects of their lives; consequently, these poor creatures, powerless, helpless, "could stand fatigue and hunger [and numberless ailments] almost better than" their Kinos.

After her efforts to detoxify the baby, it is again Juana who takes a second pragmatic initiative and suggests to get the services of a doctor: "And now she did a most surprising thing. 'The doctor,' she said. 'Go to get the doctor.'"⁹⁷

When some of the neighbours pointed that the doctor, belonging to the bourgeoisie, would not come Juana rose to the occasion for the third time, obscuring Kino, and aptly said: "Then we will go to him,"⁹⁸ hence, she prepared herself to carry the baby to the doctor in "the city of harsh outer walls and inner cool gardens,"⁹⁹ At that time "her eyes [were] as cold as the eyes of a lioness" and "Kino saw her determination."¹⁰⁰ When they set forth it was not Kino who led the procession of neighbours, rather "Kino followed her"¹⁰¹; this indicates how Juana always rises to the occasion, outshines Kino; takes the initiatives, and comes forward self-confidently. But when the fly-by-night doctor refused to treat their baby because

⁹⁶ According to a report of *Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey* (PDHS) almost 74 per cent births take place at homes in rural areas of Pakistan; as in such cases the mothers could not enjoy any maternal healthcare facility, this leads to a relatively high Maternal Mortality (MM) ratio in such areas: more than 20 per cent women in Pakistan die during "pregnancy, childbirth, and the puerperium (the period following child birth, lasting approximately six weeks)"; the report further reveals that obstetric bleeding and the related medical complexities bring about 27 per cent maternal deaths, while puerperal sepsis—"an infectious disease that afflicts women in the postnatal period"—claims lives of more than 14 per cent mothers (daily *The News*, Islamabad, March 6, 2011). According to the Chief Executive of Peshawar-based *Centre for Rural Development* (CRD) every year about 432,000 infants and expectant mothers die due to complications during delivery in Pakistan (*Ibid.*, April 24, 2011).

⁹⁷ *The Pearl*, 6.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

they could not afford his charges, they went to the sea to find a pearl; even here Juana is side by side with her husband to do her bit. On the sea-shore she is anxious for the safety of her baby and continuous her efforts to detoxify the scorpion bite. Here too her pragmatic and agile efforts outshine Kino. The following excerpt points out her benign and loving nature:

Juana laid Coyotito on the blanket, and she placed her shawl over him so that the hot sun could not shine on him.... Juana went to the water and waded in. She gathered some brown seaweed and made a flat damp poultice of it, and this she applied to the baby's swollen shoulder,...¹⁰²

The application of seaweed as a poultice indicates how Juana has been endowed with an ingenious mind and how she takes every step in the right direction to cope with the untoward accident. This is the fourth time when she rises to the occasion and does something practical for the betterment of her baby while Kino is in a fix and could not do anything substantial for the baby. Thereafter she sits in the canoe and helps her husband to row the canoe: "Then in co-ordination Juana and Kino drove their double-bladed paddles into the sea, and the canoe creased the water and hissed with speed"¹⁰³. This indicates that Juana does not only her household chore, she also helps Kino in earning their livelihood. But it is too bad that inspite of that she is not treated as his equal; Juana leads her life under the unquestioned hegemony of the hard sex.

When Kino went underwater in search of a pearl he knew that Juana was making the magic of prayer, her face set rigid and her muscles hard to force the luck, to tear the luck out of the gods' hands, for she needed the luck for the swollen shoulder of Coyotito.¹⁰⁴

These lines denote pertinacity and latent ferocity of Juana who could force the gods too to make her way.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* , 13—14.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* , 14.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* , 16.

When Kino succeeded to find the precious pearl, "the Pearl of the World", the seemingly dizzy pace of events overcame him: the same evening, their neighbours gathered in his brush house to share his joys, somebody tried to psych him out, a schizophrenia prevailed upon him, he could not dissimulate his feelings and started to give details about his priorities (for the details of these priorities see p. 42); after some fragmentary remarks he says: " My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and will know writing."¹⁰⁵ Herein Kino muddles the things and his remarks produce a *hysteron proteron*, that is, to put the cart before the horse situation: opening of books come first, then these are read, while to "know writing" comes first, then follows writing. In contrast to his schizophrenic conditions, Juana remains quiet and calm; rather she "cast her eye-lashes down and arranged her shawl to cover her face so that her excitement could not be seen".¹⁰⁶ Thus, Juana could manage to hide her feelings and remains cautious. At the same time the historic occasion could not distract her from her domestic duties and her care for her baby:

Now the dusk was coming. And Juana looped her shawl under the baby so that he hung against her hip, and she went to the fire hole and dug a coal from the ashes and broke a few twigs over it and fanned a flame alive.¹⁰⁷

It could be deduced that Juana is more practical and active as compared to Kino; moreover, she could remain non-committal during sensitive hours while Kino could be easily psyched out. Later on, at the same night, when the Father, the local priest, visits their brush house in order to share their joys Kino became completely dumbfounded while Juana managed to exchange her views with the former: "Kino nodded dumbly, and it was Juana who spoke softly. 'We will [give thanks to the Almighty], Father. And

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* , 23.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* , 21.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* , 24.

we will be married now. Kino has said so".¹⁰⁸ Thus it is another occasion where we can notice that Kino laggles behind Juana. When Kino, perceiving the potential attack from rival forces, buried the pearl under his sleeping-mat the same night, Juana too was not unaware to the sensitive situation: she was forced by her ESP to do something practical for the safety of the baby: "... Juana did not put the baby in his box tonight, but cradled him on her arms and covered his face with her head shawl";¹⁰⁹ while it seems that Kino has got exemption to do something practical for the safety of the baby for the time being. Juana radiates her acuity, precocity, judicious nature, far-sightedness, keen insight, and a vigilant ESP at the very first night in the wake of the historic occasion: she is perceptive enough to presage the dreadful events that would play havoc with their small family; when Kino was attacked by some unidentified persons late at the same night, Juana first provides the necessary first aid, and then, as she sees the handwriting on the wall, duly forewarns Kino of the imminent dangers in these words:

This thing is evil. This pearl is like a sin! It will destroy us. Throw it away, Kino. Let us break it between stones. Let us bury it and forget the place. Let us throw it back into the sea. It has brought evil. Kino, my husband, it will destroy us. It will destroy us all. Even our son.¹¹⁰

But such far-sighted Juanas are treated as Cassandra¹¹¹ in patriarchal societies: her exhortation fell on Kino's deaf ears. When the wheeling and dealing of the pearl-dealers came to the fore and they unanimously and deliberately undervalued Kino's pearl, Kino became down-hearted and thoroughly dejected; now it is only Juana who is his real sympathiser and is anxious for his safety:

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* , 25.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* , 32—33.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* , 34.

¹¹¹ In Classical Mythology Cassandra is the daughter of Priam, the king of Troy; once she was the sweet-lady of Apollo who conferred upon her the gift of prophecy, but later on he enlisted her in his black book and added that thenceforward nobody would believe what she foretold.

Juana watched him with worry, but she knew him and she knew she could help him best by being silent and by being near. And as though she too could hear the Song of Evil, she fought it, singing softly the melody of the family, of the safety and warmth and wholeness of the family. She held Coyotito in her arms and sang the song to him, to keep the evil out, and her voice was brave against the threat of the dark music.¹¹²

Later on when Kino was attacked for the second time by some unidentified miscreants through the second consecutive night, and, as a result of the ensuing scuffle, he received severe lacerations, Juana rushed to the spot and

put her arms around Kino and helped him to his feet and supported him into the house. Blood oozed down from his scalp and there was a long deep cut in his cheek from ear to chin, a deep, bleeding slash. And Kino was only half conscious. He shook his head from side to side. His shirt was torn open and his clothes half pulled off. Juana sat him down on his sleeping-mat and she wiped the thickening blood from his face with her skirt. She brought him pulque to drink in a little pitcher.¹¹³

She did her bit to dress his lacerations and tried to console him. Now when she duly perceived that all the presages have been precipitated, she again entreated her husband and said:

Kino, my husband. Kino, can you hear me? Kino, this pearl is evil. Let us destroy it before it destroys us. Let us crush it between two stones. Let us--let us throw it back in the sea where it belongs. Kino, it is evil, it is evil!¹¹⁴

But Kino gives no heed to her entreaties and neglects all her forewarnings. Not only that, he also tries to manifest his phallographic hegemony, alludes to his dominance, “[h]is fist pounded the sleeping-mat”, and says: “Believe me. I am a man,”¹¹⁵ here, needless to say, he means that “man” is a repository of power; he ascribes the sources of power only to the hard sex; at the same time, he negates, by implication, the significance of women-folk and underestimates their values; this leads to the deep-rooted and universal notion of male-chauvinism which is rampant in all societies of the Third World countries. In other

¹¹² *The Pearl*, 48.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* , 49.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* , 49—50.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* , 50.

words, Kino wants to consolidate his hegemony on the basis of phallogracy or the established phallocentric system.

But Juana, when she perceives the defiance and refractory nature of the “man”, becomes the mouth-piece of Nemesis and alludes to the possible consequences: “Kino, I am afraid. A man can be killed,” and implores him again: “Let us throw the pearl back into the sea,”¹¹⁶ But all her entreaties and forewarnings fell on deaf ears. On the other hand, he resorted to his conventional phallocentric authority and hushed her, “for his voice was command.”¹¹⁷ Moreover, herein the self-assertion of one gender is in sharp contrast with the self-effacement of the other. Kino is a paragon of a control freak. In spite of her negligence, Juana is a personification of patience and cool-mindedness. When Kino asks whether she would afraid to accompany him in the troublesome journey towards the capital “over the sea and over the mountains,”¹¹⁸ Juana replies calmly: “No my husband.”¹¹⁹ This indicates Juana’s docile nature and her fidelity. All her suggestions and entreaties are put aside by Kino but she does not even complain.

When Juana realized that Kino did not want to part with the “evil” pearl, she herself wanted to get rid of that “evil” thing: one morning she rose quietly, dug out the pearl, and proceeded towards the sea to throw it back therein. Kino followed her hurriedly and snatched the pearl from her hand; he also gave her a sound beating. In spite of his harsh treatment

There was no anger in her for Kino. He had said: ‘I am a man,’ and that meant certain things to Juana. It meant that he was half insane and half god. It meant that Kino would drive his strength against a mountain and plunge his strength against the sea. Juana, in her woman’s soul, knew that the mountain would stand while the man broke himself; that the sea would surge while the man drowned in it.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

But Juana does not even think of resistance, not to speak of imposing her will. She remains there in a pitiable condition. About the wholesome effects of a woman on a family's life the narrator says: "Sometimes the quality of woman, the reason, the caution, the sense of preservation, could cut through Kino's manness and save them all."¹²¹ When she recovered herself she goes "creeping up the beach after Kino"¹²²; look and behold her fidelity for her husband! About the realistic and cautious nature of Juana, Cynthia Burkhead writes:

Her role in the story is to provide the reason that Kino lacks as he moves further into the unreasoning, or "insane", part of his psyche. It is Juana who, each time the pearl poses a threat to the family, asks Kino to throw it back. When he refuses, Juana risks Kino's anger by attempting to throw it back to the sea herself Though she provides reason in the story, it is clear her reason will not stop Kino from his single-minded goal of realizing the pearl's wealth.¹²³

When Kino was attacked for the third time, now at the morning, and he stabbed to death one of the attackers, Juana found herself in the most critical situation; she became completely unaware of her painful body and tried to do something for the safety of her family. She not only provided first aid to Kino but also dragged aside the dead body that they might escape the consequences. The narrator states:

Now, in an instant, Juana knew that the old life was gone for ever. A dead man in the path and Kino's knife, dark bladed beside him, convinced her. All of the time Juana had been trying to rescue something of the old peace, of the time before the pearl. But now it was gone, and there was no retrieving it. ... Quickly she dragged the dead man from the pathway into the shelter of the brush. She went to Kino and sponged his face with her wet skirt.¹²⁴

This is another occasion when the self-effacement and caring nature of Juana come to the fore. She duly urges Kino that they should escape therefrom because he has committed a

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 108.

¹²⁴ *The Pearl*, 53.

murder; otherwise, he would face the music. Thus, it is clear that most of the initiatives, during crises, are taken by Juana; she, like a beacon, provides light to Kino during stormy weather. When some prowlers carried out an arson attack on Kino's brush house, Juana rushed thereto and fetched Coyotito and Kino's blanket. Though Kino has become "like a leprosy", Juana's fidelity and her responsibilities towards her husband and baby remain unshakeable and unwavering. Now when Kino committed a murder, his enemies burnt his brush house to ashes, and they damaged his canoe, he decided that they should escape as soon as possible in order to save himself and his family; the decision was taken only by the two brothers—Kino and Juan Tomas—and Juana, needless to say, was completely ignored. This indicates the patriarchal order of the society wherein womenfolk are deprived to say their say as far as important issues are concerned. Poor Juana remains quiet and calm and when Kino sets forth towards the north at night she follows as a mute and dumb creature. It means that Juana is disenfranchised only and only on the basis of her sex.

They quietly hit the road after sun-setting and continued their troublesome journey through the whole night. At morning they found a hide-out in order to protect themselves from the searching eyes of their enemies. There Kino slept for a short time but Juana "sat quiet as a stone and her face was quiet . . . she sat as still as a sentinel"¹²⁵ and nursed Coyotito. When the chasing trackers reached to the proximity of their hide-out Kino almost lost all hopes of escape and said to Juana: "Perhaps I should let them take me."¹²⁶ But Juana goaded him on and she caused to muster his courage; she asked him: "Do you think they would take you back alive to say they had stolen it? Do you think they would

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* , 63.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* , 66.

let me live? Do you think they would let the little one here live?"¹²⁷; consequently, she prevailed upon him and he decided to move towards the mountains in order to escape the trackers. This is another occasion when Juana's decision-making capacity, though not recognized and appreciated openly, forces Kino to proceed towards the mountains. Consequently, she followed Kino during the tiring escape on the hilly terrain. At a time, during their trying journey, Kino examined "her ankles, cut and scratched from the stones and brush," but "she covered them quickly with her skirt".¹²⁸ Two points could be deduced therefrom: first, Kino only "examine[d]" her injured ankles and did not bother to say any reassuring word or to do something practical as she did thrice when Kino was attacked: she dressed his lacerations, provided first aid, and sympathized him. This indicates the lack of sympathy and the uncaring or indifferent nature of menfolk towards the womenfolk. Second, when Juana "covered quickly" her bruised ankles, it implies her patience, endurance, and her resignation to her lot. Thanks to the unmindful nature of men, most of the womenfolk, especially in backward areas, lead their miserable life without any complaint or fuss.

During the tiresome flight in the mountainous area, Juana summoned up her courage to keep up with Kino. At a time Kino "looked for weakness in her face, for fear or irresolution, and there was none. Her eyes were very bright"¹²⁹. During the flight she was a source of strength and courage for Kino for "he had taken strength from her".¹³⁰ Though they took great pre-cautionary measures, rifle of one of the trackers went off randomly and shot Coyotito on his head; resultantly, Kino succeeded to get rid of the

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.* , 68.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

three trackers but he had to pay dearly as he also lost his son. Kino snatched the rifle from one of the trackers and killed them one by one. Then they started their homeward journey.

Kino took the rifle while Juana carried a bundle on her shoulder containing the dead body of their son, Coyotito. The rifle indicates the macho, the aggressiveness, the bellicose nature of the hard sex, while the dead body over Juana's shoulder stands for the doleful and cumbersome life of the womenfolk. The narrator states that Kino "carried fear with him" and "he was as dangerous as a rising storm."¹³¹ On the other hand, Juana's "face was hard and lined and leathery with fatigue and with the tightness with which she fought fatigue. And her wide eyes stared inwards on herself. She was as remote and removed as Heaven".¹³² All this refers to Juana's pitiable situation. It is noticeable that during their homeward journey Kino and Juana proceed "side by side".

Cynthia Burkhead comments on the homeward journey of the couple:

Kino and Juana are walking along the road, she carrying the body of Coyotito. They walk side by side rather than in the usual single file. Their position on the road indicates a change that has occurred within Kino. The distinction between male and female has become blurred. In Chapter 4, Kino asked Juana to believe he would be able to protect their good fortune because he was a man. Ironically, Kino's actions as a man without reason or caution are what cost them their greatest fortune, Coyotito. It is not shame that makes Kino walk side by side with Juana, but instead the change in Kino that allows him to accept within himself the female qualities of carefulness and reason, thus creating in Kino a new kind of man.¹³³

Though "the distinction between male and female has become blurred", the rifle over Kino's shoulder implies the former's dominance over the latter; the rifle could be interpreted as a tool that enhances the hegemony of its possessor. Moreover, "the change in Kino" and his being "a new kind of man", after much blood-shed and violence, allude

¹³¹ *Ibid.* , 78.

¹³² *Ibid.* , 77.

¹³³ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 105—06.

to the changed enlightened mentality of menfolk, especially in educated societies; likewise, such changes in these societies became possible only after hectic activities of the rights groups, various movements of the suffragettes, and to crown it all, after bloody revolutions in certain parts of the world. Examples of Russian, Chinese, English, Turkish, and Egyptian societies could be cited in this regard. But in spite of their tall claims for women's rights, the key positions in their respective governments are still occupied only by menfolk for decades. According to a report of the United Nations, 2010, glass ceiling in almost every field is a universal problem for women; the report reveals that presently "only 14 women are either heads of state or lead the government in their country. On average, only one in six cabinet ministers around the world is a woman".¹³⁴

3.4 The Father's Silhouette

In the story of *The Pearl*, Steinbeck has depicted the Father only at three places—at the beginning and then at the mid of Chap. 3, and then in Chap. 4. He appears in person only once when he visits Kino's brush house at night in order to share his joys in perspective of the precious pearl. This bare depiction of the Father is in line with the modern secular world that tends to be more materialistic and less spiritual and divine.

The priest has been mentioned for the first time when the news about Kino's precious pearl spread like a wild fire in the town. The narrator states that the news

came to the priest walking in his garden, and it put a thoughtful look in his eyes and a memory of certain repairs necessary to the church. He wondered what the pearl would be worth. And he wondered whether he had baptized Kino's baby, or married him for that matter.¹³⁵

It could be noticed that the priest, like rest of the laity, started to take interest in Kino's pearl that is a mundane affair. His thoughts about certain repairs in the church foretell

¹³⁴ Daily Dawn, Karachi, October 21, 2010.

¹³⁵ *The Pearl*, 19.

that he would claim something in the riches of Kino and would try to extract it therefrom. His thoughts about the baptism of Kino's baby or about his ceremonious wedding services in the church objectify his religious services and subtly lead to the practice of indulgences. The narrator balances his remarks about the priest when he portrays the same grasping nature of "the shopkeepers" in the adjacent sentence: "The news came to the shopkeepers, and they looked at men's clothes that had not sold so well."¹³⁶ The priest has been juxtaposed with the shopkeepers; the latter have been depicted in the background of the former. When they heard about Kino's richness, both thought of their respective gains: one thought of receiving something to repair the church or to receive something in connection with the ceremonious church services, while the other expected something at the possible sale of "men's clothes that had not sold so well". Herein, the proximity of both the priest and the shopkeepers in the same syntactic unit implies that they are two different faces of the same coin; both possess a commercial and worldly mentality; in other words, both think to bag something from Kino's richness. The priest objectifies his religious services like the clothes of the shopkeepers. Just as they are in close proximity in the typographical arrangement of the *novella*, in the same manner they are equally responsible for the exploitation of many Kinos, the down-trodden, in day-to-day life. The priest is the implicit aspect while the shopkeepers are the explicit manifestation of the same oppressive capitalist system; both are parts of the same chain. Therefore, as the narrator states that "Kino's pearl went into the dreams, the speculations, the schemes, the plans, the futures, the wishes, the needs, the lusts, the hungers, of

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

everyone”¹³⁷, the priest has not been excluded to entertain such desires and he has been noticeably depicted near the shopkeepers.

The priest has been mentioned for the second time in round about the middle of Chap. 3 wherein he appears in person for the only time. Like the inmates of the brush houses, the priest goes to Kino’s hut in order to share his joys in perspective of the precious pearl; certainly this act of the priest brackets him together with the laity. When he appears on the scene, the narrator describes him briefly in these words: “The priest came in—a greying, ageing man with an old skin and a young sharp eye. Children he considered these people, and he treated them like children.”¹³⁸ These remarks of the narrator about the priest could be interpreted as caustic ones: “greying” implies a dull or boring character which could not motivate any zest for life in his fellows; the connotations of “ageing” are self-evident, that is, apathetic, passive, affected by the wears and tears of time, out of date, no longer fresh, no longer enthusiastic, no longer energetic, ... Moreover, the “—ing” inflections imply his degrading or deteriorating condition; as he is a representative of the church, the same institute, and the do’s and don’ts associated therewith, also undergoes through a process of degeneration and most of its tenets have been discarded. His “old skin” is a symbol of or a relic of the Mediaeval papacy that used, in league with the then monarchs, to burn alive those who would challenge, or even doubt, their hegemony. But his “young sharp eye” indicates his self-interest and his piercing sight. Besides, only one eye has been mentioned—a young sharp eye—it implies that he is completely absorbed in this world only and does not give any heed to the Hereafter. When he entered into Kino’s hut, he started to address Kino in these words:

¹³⁷ *Ibid.* , 20.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.* , 24.

"Kino, thou art named after a great man—and a great Father of the Church. Thy namesake tamed the desert and sweetened the minds of thy people, didst thou know that? It is in the books"¹³⁹. Herein, the sycophancy of the priest could be easily perceived. In order to bag something from Kino's richness, he tries, like the doctor, to trap Kino "as his people were always trapped" in the capacity of the priest's children. It is the utter hypocrisy of the Father when he mentions to Kino his namesake probably in history.

When Kino showed his pearl to the priest the latter could not help but wondered and "gasped" at the beauty of the pearl. He duly advised the couple to thank God because He conferred upon them such a valuable treasure over night. When Juana informed him that Kino has decided that they will be married in the church in a ceremonious manner, the Father appreciated their first decision and said a farewell to them as his "children".

The third portraiture of the Father has been portrayed in Chap. 4; it is the second morning of the story and Kino and his brother Juan Tomas, accompanied by their next of kin, are on their way to the town market to sell the precious pearl to the pearl-dealers therein. Kino and Juan Tomas discuss some of the points taken from the annual sermon delivered by the priest. They say that the priest, as a representative of God, has denounced the deceitful tactics of pearl-dealers and has condemned all the racketeers. Kino says that the Father has categorically said in his sermon that

The loss of the pearl was a punishment visited on those who tried to leave their station. And the father made it clear that each man and woman is like a soldier sent by God to guard some part of the castle of the Universe. And some are in the ramparts and some far deep in the darkness of the walls. But each one must remain faithful to his post and must not go running about, ...¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 40.

These remarks betray the conservative mentality of the clergy; they want to preserve the *status quo* and, in most of the cases, exhort the laity to resign themselves to their lots. It is this conservative mentality thereof which is vehemently decried by Marxists and in their fervent indiscriminate attacks they even go to the extent to do away with the religion in toto.¹⁴¹ In the above excerpt the Father discourages the masses “to leave their station”—they should resign themselves to their lots and should not question the established social order; that is why Marxist critics argue against religion that it promotes stability and “justifies the social order and a person’s position within it”. A writer cites the following lines, taken from a Victorian hymn, that sums the conservative mentality of the then society:

¹⁴¹ In contrast to the extreme views of Marx, Engels admitted that in some circumstances religion could motivate the masses for a socio-economic change; he elaborated that some political groups, active for a socio-economic change, justify their demands on the bases of religion and they want a “change on earth rather than salvation in heaven”. Some of the contemporary Marxists share Engel’s view and they do not want to do away with the religion outright. Maduro is one of them who recognizes the “relative autonomy” of religion from the economic system. He argues that religion is not a conservative force *per se*, rather it promotes revolutionary causes; and in some cases religion intensified the momentum of social revolutions. Maduro further says that disagreements on theological matters in religious institutions can provide new interpretations of the religion concerned that may lead to the denunciation of the wide gulf between the rich and the poor. Another critic, G. K. Nelson, gives some examples wherein religion challenged the *status quo*, “undermined stability”, and brought about sudden changes or revolutions: first, the revolutionaries of Irish Republicanism in Northern Ireland fervently aligned themselves with Roman Catholicism. Second, King Martin Luther and the Southern Christian Leadership Council played a vital role against racial discrimination and for the civil rights of the blacks in the USA during the 1960s. Third, some revolutionary groups erupted from the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America in the 1960s; these revolutionaries urged their comrades to rise against the oppressive policies of right-wing dictatorships; consequently, these Catholic revolutionaries succeeded to seize power in Nicaragua in 1979. Fourth, the Islamic revolutionaries in Iran succeeded to overthrow the monarchy therein in 1979; the charismatic personality of their religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini played a vital role in the integration of these revolutionaries. Fifth, the Roman Catholic Church played an important role in the collapse of the Communist monopoly and in the introduction of many changes in Polish society in 1989. Sixth, Archbishop Tutu strongly criticized *apartheid* in South Africa (Harlambose and Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 438, 439, 451—52). Moreover, Islam decries, in no uncertain terms, every form of oppression, resents the wide gulf between the-haves and the-have-nots, condemns the concentration of wealth in a few hands, discourages the primogeniture or hereditary rule of governance of the chosen few, expects the rulers to consider themselves accountable to the ruled, and urges its followers to take initiative steps for their spiritual as well as temporal uplift: “Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves.” (*The Holy Quran*, 13: 11)

The rich man in his castle,
 The poor man at his gate,
 God made them high and lowly,
 And ordered their estate.

So, the established socio-economic structure is justified; such notions of the conservative circles lead to convince the deprived to remain content within their miseries and to desist from any sudden reaction. They often ascribe such social stratification to divine powers.¹⁴² As a net result, the hegemonic position of the chosen few remains intact; while the plights and sufferings of the masses deepen with the passage of time. Wayne A. Cornelius and Jeffrey A. Weldon refer to a survey report of Centeno's *Democracy Within Reason* that until 1989, 91.7 per cent key political slots, including state governorships, membership of the senate, cabinet and sub-cabinet ministerial offices, were occupied by Mexican bourgeoisie; when a sample of 1,113 federal government officials was interviewed, "only 0.7 percent said that their fathers were peasants while 0.9 percent described them as workers"¹⁴³.

¹⁴² Harlambos and Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 436.

¹⁴³ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 493.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

This chapter further elaborates the four forms of hegemony identified in the previous chapter; it has been divided into five parts: the first four sections(4.1—4.4) coincide with the four sections of the previous chapter; the former are the corresponding elaborations of the latter. The fifth section of this chapter (4.5) explains Althusser's *Ideological State Apparatuses* and the *Repressive Structures* in the case of *The Pearl*. This chapter provides supplementary corroborative evidence to the contents of the text. Herein, some supplementary information and examples have been taken from history and current world politics; findings of various survey reports and organizations have also been given here and there; such points aim to co-relate the hegemonic patterns of the *novella* with the day-to-day life; thereby verisimilitude of *The Pearl* and universality of Marxist criticism have been spotlighted.

4.1 Racial Hegemony and Socio-economic Disparities

The repercussions or end results of such a friction between the- haves and the-haventos of a society could be for the time being, or they could hit the society concerned throughout its fallout; the drastic effects of such a friction could be perceived in the social, economic, and political spheres of the society concerned; in most of the cases these repercussions or effects reverberate in the lives of the next generations and in the adjacent or distant societies too; for example, in spite of the elapse of a long period of “four hundred years”, there is a wide gulf between Kino and his folk—“the little Indians”—and the inmates of “the city of harsh outer walls and inner cool gardens”.

Moreover, a resultant hegemonic position of either one class or another, of either one sex or another is the inevitable aftermath of such a perpetual friction; consequently, some emerge as the dominant, while the others are subdued as the dominated or the subalterns; the latter remain entirely at the mercy of the former.

As far as *The Pearl* is concerned, the hegemonic position of one class over the other has brought about conspicuous socio-economic disparities.

When Steinbeck mentions "four hundred years", he rightly alludes to the historical invasion of Mexico by Spaniards in the first quarter of the sixteenth century; hence, he duly backs his fiction with the facts taken from history. The following remarks of Wayne A. Cornelius and Jeffrey A. Weldon corroborate this period of "four hundred years" of beating, starvation, robbery, and heavy-handedness:

Long before Hernan Cortes landed in 1519 and began the Spanish conquest of Mexico, its territory was inhabited by numerous Indian civilizations. ... Smaller Indian societies were decimated by diseases introduced by the invaders or were vanquished by the sword. Subsequent grants of land and Indian labor by the Spanish Crown to the colonists further isolated the rural Indian population and deepened their exploitation. ... The Indian minority has been persistently marginal to the national economy and political system. Today, the indigenous population is heavily concentrated in rural communities that the government classifies as the country's most economically depressed and service-deprived, located primarily in the southeast and the center of the country. ... The Indian population is an especially troubling reminder of the millions of people who have been left behind by uneven development in twentieth-century Mexico.¹

Marxism alleges such class and social frictions for the exploitation and miseries of the proletariat. They argue that in Capitalist systems one class is thrived at the cost of exploitation and suppression of another; thereby the more wealthy class succeeds to dominate the have-nots. About Marxism and class conflict, Ralph Miliband says:

¹ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 470—71.

[In Marxism] the focus, always is on *class* antagonism and *class* [not my italics] conflict. This does not mean that Marxism does not recognize the existence of other kinds of conflict within societies and between them—ethnic, religious, national, etc. but it does consider these rivalries, conflict and wars as directly derived from, or related to class conflicts; whether it is right to do so is not here the point. The fact is that in Marxism this is the essential, primary focus.²

If we give a bird's eye-view to the national history of Mexico, we could come across such sporadic “class antagonism and class conflict”; for example the very first decade of the twentieth century emerged as a land mark in the history of post-colonial Mexico when a “nationwide civil conflict” erupted in 1910 against the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz (1830—1915), a soldier-turned-politician who managed to remain in power for more than three decades; his rival forces, under the banner of Francisco Madero (1873—1913), succeeded to overthrow him in May 1911. Second, when the peasantry of Morelos state, an administrative unit in south-central Mexico, resented the usurpation of their lands by “the rural aristocracy by subterfuge during the” reign of Porfirio Diaz, they rallied around the revolutionary leadership of Emiliano Zapata (1879—1919) to redress their grievances. Third, round about the same period, “an army consisting of jobless workers, small landowners, and cattle hands, whose main interest was steady employment” joined the ranks of Panchao Villa (1877—1923) in the north.³ In the very opening chapter of the *The Pearl*, the narrator says in no uncertain terms that the story of the *novella* revolves around a class-ridden society and main theme of the story is the fractured relations of the two classes—the-haves and the have-nots, the oppressors and the oppressed, the dominant and the dominated, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The first chapter is rather a prologue, exposition, or an introduction to the *novella*; it foretells about the strained social and economic relations between the two

² Ralph Miliband, *Marxism and Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978) 18—19.

³ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 472.

classes. Besides this, the narrator has amply described the appearances, physique, the domestic life, and the life style of both Kino and the doctor; both have been sketched with a convincing touch of realism. The sarcastic, derogatory, and disparaging language about the doctor indicates that the narrator himself is against a class-ridden system wherein some thrive and flourish at the sweat blood of others. The mention of the beggars realize to the readers that such parasitic and indolent fellows are common in a Capitalist society; they only prey on others and want to extract from them as much as possible. The scorpion bite of Kino's "first-born" baby indicates that it is always the have-nots who suffer in such a system. About such antagonistic and tense relations between various classes in human society, a notable American Marxist critic Fredric Jameson quotes Marx and Engels, both the top brass of twentieth century Marxism, in his "On Interpretation: Literature as Socially Symbolic Act", in the following words:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles: freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guillotine and journeyman—in a word, oppressor and oppressed—stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of contending classes.⁴

Therefore, it could be comprehended that main plot of the *novella* revolves around the strained relations between the-haves and the have-nots of La Paz.

The cut-throat competition and the resultant strained relations between Kino's brethren and the town's bourgeoisie have badly affected the former's socio-economic situation; most of them are fishermen and they live on the breadline; they have been restricted to a ghetto wherein they tantalise for modern amenities of life; there is no proper arrangement of sanitation, necessary medication, primary education, or any

⁴ Fredric Jameson, *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory: A Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. K. M. Newton (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1997) 182.

reliable livelihood. The financial destitution of Kino is self-evident in this respect; they could not afford the high charges of doctors to have themselves or their children treated; they cannot get admission for their children in the bourgeois schools; they cannot afford the charges to observe their weddings and baptisms in the church in a ceremonious manner; sickness and starvation are the two frightful ghosts that loom in their day-to-day life; at a point Kino says to his brother: "What have I to fear but starvation ?"; the latter replies: "That we must all fear."⁵ At another place, the narrator states that "sickness is second only to hunger as the enemy of poor people".⁶ In fact, throughout the *novella* sporadic examples of food scarcity, strained relations among various species, and the paradigms of the dominant and the dominated could be observed. For example, first, in the very opening paragraph of the *novella* the narrator states that "the early pigs were already beginning their ceaseless turning of twigs and bits of wood to see whether anything to eat had been overlooked." This indicates that these pigs, like the fishermen, were forced by circumstances to search the sea-shore for their food in order to keep the wolf from the door. Second, when Kino rose early in the morning and went outside his brush house, he sat there for some time and observed some ants on the ground. He further observed that "a dusty ant frantically tried to escape the sand trap an ant lion had dug for him."⁷ Thus, the concept of ensnaring, pitfalls, traps, and the ultimate exploitation of one species by another is evident here too; herein also some thrive at the expense of others; the ant-lions, like the townspeople, survive only by a parasitic relation with the ants; the former exploits the latter for their self-interest; the latter are subjugated to the perpetual hegemony of the former; hence, strained and inimical relations characterize, as in the

⁵ *The Pearl*, 47.

⁶ *Ibid.* , 30.

⁷ *The Pearl*, 2.

case of the fishermen and the townspeople, the existence of both the species. Karsten further illustrates this relationship and its implication in these words:

Even in what might be termed indirect description, Steinbeck has pictures of the parasitic relationship between the community and the town. In the first instance of metaphors from the animal world, Steinbeck reports how an ant, a social animal working for the good of its colony, has been trapped by an ant-lion, living near the ant colony to prey upon it for his individual needs. In the same way the individuals of the town have built "traps" to take advantage of the ignorance of the Indians and to prey upon them for whatever they have of wealth, labor, or services.⁸

Third, next to ants and the ant-lion, the narrator mentions a dog watched by Kino: "A thin, timid dog came close and, at a soft word from Kino, curled up, arranged its tail nearly over its feet, and laid its chin delicately on the pile."⁹ Here thinness of the dog indicates his under-nourishment. Fourth, the narrator also mentions two cocks who are hostile to each other: "Near the brush fence two roosters bowed and feinted at each other with squared wings and neck feathers ruffed out. It would be a clumsy fight."¹⁰ The confrontation between these two members of the same species too indicates their strained relations that is the main theme of the *novella*. Fifth, when Kino goes, in the second chapter, to the nearby sea in search of a pearl, the narrator portrays also "the hungry dogs and the hungry pigs" on the sea-shore in these words: "On the beach the hungry dogs and the hungry pigs of the town searched endlessly for any dead fish or sea bird that might have floated in on a rising tide"¹¹.

In a quite different analogy, Karsten writes that

the dead fish or seabirds ...[represent] the Indians who live off the sea and who for all general purposes are *dead* because they have no power

⁸ Karsten, *Thematic Structure in The Pearl*, 4.

⁹ *The Pearl*, 2—3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

to resist, while the former [the hungry dogs and pigs of the town] represent the greedy townspeople.¹²

Moreover, “the hungry dogs and the hungry pigs” have been associated with “the town” only; the town, in turn, could be associated with urbanisation or the industrial aspect of modern human life. Sixth, in the nearby estuary the same relationship of the dominants and the dominated, and the resultant exploitation of the latter, could be observed. The narrator states that

Out in the estuary a tight woven school of small fishes glittered and broke water to escape a school of great fishes that drove in to eat them. And in the houses the people could hear the swish of the small ones and the bouncing splash of the great ones as the slaughter went on.¹³

Here the “small fishes”, like the “little Indians”, are completely on the mercy of the “great fishes”; the latter exploit the former for their own aggrandisement and self-interest. This small aquatic eco-system is the exact replica of Capitalist system wherein a few “great fishes” flourish and thrive on many “small fishes”; consequently, with the passage of time all “small fishes”— the penurious, the weaklings, the small entrepreneurs, and the down-trodden— are destituted, while all the resources are concentrated in the hands of the chosen few, “the great ones”. Moreover, the word “slaughter” indicates that the narrator vehemently condemns such dependence of “the great ones” on “the small ones”, the exploitation of the-haves-nots on parts of the-haves.

Seventh, the same scene of exploitation and antagonistic relations could be observed between two other species: “... the night mice crept about on the ground and the little night hawks hunted them silently”¹⁴. A parallelism could be portrayed between the world

¹² Ernest E. Karsten, Jr, *Thematic Structure in The Pearl*, published in *The English Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 1, p. 4; published by National Council of Teachers of English, January, 1965.

¹³ *The Pearl*, 29.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

of animals and the world of human beings: just as members of one species “silently” hunt members of another species behind the darkness, in the same manner Kino and his family members will be “hunted silently” by unidentified prowlers; the latter case, in the world of human beings, is more regrettable and more condemnable because herein both the predators and their prey are members of the same species—“the crown of the universe”.

Eighth, in the last scene of the *novella*, in the northern mountain wherever there are a little traces of life various predators have made their inroads therein: “The cats took their prey there, and strewed feathers and lapped water through their bloody teeth. The little pools were places of life because of the water, and places of killing because of the water, too”¹⁵.

Thus, we could observe that the entire *novella* is replete with the events of the exploitation of many at the hands of a few; some of them are the predators while the rest are (mis)used as their prey; some of them are dominant while others are victims of their heavy-handedness and atrocities. The common under-current through all these events and incidents is the concept of hegemony; the running *motif* of hegemony underpins all these events and incidents as different series of the same chain. In all the above-mentioned examples it is the hegemonic position of the few that have facilitated their heavy-handedness over the rest.

As far as human societies are concerned such hegemonic positions of the chosen few bring about socio-economic disparities; consequently, the gulf between the-haves and the-have-nots deepens with the passage of time. Wayne A. Cornelius and Jeffrey A. Weldon write that

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 70.

Indeed, Mexico apparently had a higher overall concentration of income in the mid-1970s than in 1910, before the outbreak of the revolution. By 1977 the poorest 70 percent of Mexico families received only 24 percent of all disposable income, while the richest 30 percent of families received 76 percent of income.¹⁶

The above-mentioned figures indicate that only a chosen few enjoy a lion's share in the resources of Mexico. It would not be out of place to mention that the same situation of socio-economic disparities could also be noticed in Pakistan: according to the President of *Pakistan Society Watch* (PSW), a non-governmental organization, the gap between the-haves and the-have-nots widens with the passage of time; he further revealed that "social divide is growing rapidly in the country [Pakistan], as just 115 families are controlling over 85 per cent of the national output. ...real income continues to fall for the poor and increase for the rich due to some dubious policies".¹⁷ The above-mentioned analysts, in the case of Mexico, have also cited the immediate socio-economic repercussions of such a wide gulf between the-haves and the-have-nots in these words:

By 1989 more than one-quarter of Mexican children under five years of age in rural areas were malnourished; the incidence of severe malnutrition among such children had risen by 100 percent during the preceding ten years. While 78 percent of Mexico's elementary school-age children were enrolled in 1990, only 54 percent of those starting primary school finished it. Among the dwellings included in the 1990 census, 57 percent had no piped water inside the dwelling, and 13 percent had no electricity.¹⁸

Citing to the government's statistical research agency, *Instituto Nacional de Estadistica, Geografia Informatica* (INFEGI), they have also pointed out the fact that some areas of Mexico regrettably lag behind other areas as far as various amenities of modern life are concerned:

¹⁶ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 508.

¹⁷ Daily *The Nation*, Islamabad, January 24, 2011.

¹⁸ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 508.

On every indicator of economic opportunity and social well-being, there are vast disparities among Mexico's regions and between rural and urban areas. Unemployment and under-employment are concentrated overwhelmingly in the rural sector, which contains at least 70 percent of the population classified by the government as living in extreme poverty. The rate of infant mortality in rural areas is nearly 50 percent higher than the national average. Interregional disparities in social well-being are equally extreme. In 1990 the percentage of persons with incomes lower than two minimum salaries (a bare subsistence level) ranged from 40 percent in Baja California to 80 percent in Chiapas. A composite index of social well-being in 2000 shows the Federal District (Mexico City) and the northern border states as being the most privileged, and the southern states (especially Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Guerrero) as the most marginalized. Gross domestic product per capita in the same year was 8 times higher in the Federal District than in Oaxaca, for example. This pattern of extreme spatial inequalities has remained essentially unchanged for several decades.¹⁹

The community life of Kino and his people who live in brush houses, in sharp contrast to the townspeople who enjoy the palatial houses in "the city of harsh outer walls and inner cool gardens", is in harmony with the above-mentioned figures.

4.2 Economic Hegemony

The first three chapters portray the domestic and social life of Kino, as well as that of the doctor; both the characters have been portrayed as representatives of their respective classes. The individual confrontation of the doctor and Kino indicates how both the classes of La Paz stand poles apart from each other as their respective life style is concerned. The first half, consisting of the three chapters, has been dedicated mostly to the miserable life of Kino; besides, the portion provides an introduction to the open conflict between Kino and his rival social forces. The next three chapters deal with this open, often armed, conflict. Henceforward, the conflict has been extended to the well-established institutions of free-market or *laissez-faire* that is a hallmark of Capitalism. Such institutions and the practices thereof, strengthen the hegemony of the-haves on the-

¹⁹ *Ibid.* , 508—09.

have-nots. And in the other half portion of the *novella*, it has been portrayed how the bigwigs and string-pullers of such a system devise various tactics to swindle the dominated out of their meagre resources; they practise various manoeuvres to deceive the victims of this system. Henceforward, the potential antagonism between the rival classes develops into open armed clashes; the sole purpose of such clashes is to grab “the great Pearl of the World”.

In order to sell his pearl, Kino went to the nearby market of pearl-dealers; it is a market that is devoid of competition in favour of the customers; herein cartelization holds sway. The narrator describes the cartel-based nature of the market in these words:

It was supposed that the pearl buyers were individuals acting alone, bidding against one another for the pearls the fishermen brought in. And once it had been so. ...Now there was only one pearl buyer with many hands, and the men who sat in their offices and waited for Kino knew what price they would offer, how high they would bid, and what method each would use.²⁰

Thus, the fishermen could not enjoy the real variety of free-market: they could not find another pearl-dealer to sell their pearls at a higher price thereto; they will have to receive for their pearls whatever has been pre-arranged by the string-pullers of free-market. In the guise of different competitive pearl-dealers only a Hobson’s choice is imposed upon them. Louis Althusser has called this practice of the free-market as *interpellation*. *Interpellation* is that aspect of a Capitalist system wherein the masses are reminded that they enjoy a free choice but, on the contrary, certain things, manipulated behind the screen, are being imposed upon them. *Interpellation* implies the so-called situation wherein the masses are “encouraged” to consider themselves as free individuals in the socio-economic and political systems; consequently, they think that they “are

²⁰ *The Pearl*, 37.

freely choosing what is in fact being imposed upon" them. This leads to the "perpetuation" of a socio-economic and political set-up, to the prolongation of the hegemony of the manipulators, to the concentration of "wealth and power in the hands of the few", and to the miseries of the common people.²¹ Harmon corroborates such tactics of the few bourgeoisie in these words:

A capitalist at this stage of development may have employed one or very few workers. His relations with them (production relations) were suitable to the techniques (forces of production) employed. The concentration of ownership, however, resulting from the bitter competition among capitalists for the available surplus value, which can be converted into capital, has created an entirely different society, one marked by the existence of a handful of 'industrial millionaires' who exploit an enormous majority of proletarian.

The advanced stage of capitalism is also marked by declining rate of profit. The decline occurs because as capitalism progresses there is an increasing accumulation of capital, and since the value of anything decreases in inverse proportion to its supply, the value of capital, in terms of what can be done with it through investment, also declines. It follows, says Marx, that there is accelerated competition among capitalists for profitable capital investments, but competition merely serves to intensify the rapidity of the trend. The capitalists resort a number of devices in an effort to stave off collapse.²²

It was due to such economic crises during the last three decades of the twentieth century (1976—77, 1982—89, 1994—96) in the political history of Mexico that the Mexicans threw to the wind the 71 years old political monopoly of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) in the "watershed election" of July 2, 2000. These economic crises accelerated the momentum of a revolutionary transformation in Mexican Politics. During these crises, the Mexicans faced a lot of economic problems; they lost millions of jobs, their "real wages" remained stagnant or were cut back, "inflation and currency devaluation" badly hit their "savings and businesses"; resultantly, "government benefits for the middle and lower classes were slashed in the

²¹ Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Manchester University Press, 2002) 164—65.

²² M. Judd Harmon, *Political Thought, From Plato to the Present* (USA: MacGraw Hill Book Company, 1968) 387.

austerity budgets necessitated by the economic crises". Analysts attributed all these crises to "government mismanagement" of the national exchequer.²³

Not to speak of the government's intervention to curb the encroachments of free-market against the down-trodden, they often become accomplices of them against the governed; "capitalism has never functioned without the active support of the state"²⁴; consequently, their one-sided policies further widen the socio-economic disparities between the-haves and the-have-nots. The following two examples from the national economy of Mexico corroborate this fact. First, Wayne A. Cornelius and Jeffrey A. Weldon reveal such pro-bourgeoisie policies of the Mexican government in these words:

From 1940 until well into the 1970s, a strong elite consensus prevailed on the state's role in the economy. The state facilitated private capital accumulation and protected the capitalist system by limiting popular demands for consumption and redistribution of wealth; ... The policies and investment preferences of Mexico's postrevolutionary governments contributed much to the country's highly inegalitarian development. At minimum, the public policies pursued since 1940 failed to counteract the wealth-concentrating effects of private market forces. Evidence is strong that some government investments and policies actually reinforced these effects. For example, during most of the post-1940 period, government tax and credit policies worked primarily to the advantage of the country's wealthiest agribusiness and industrial entrepreneurs.²⁵

Second, during the last quarter of the twentieth century the Mexican economy was re-steered under the introduction of the state-sponsored *Neoliberal Economic Development Model*. As usual in a Capitalist system, this "new, market-oriented development model thus far has exacerbated—not alleviated—Mexico's poverty and inequality problems". In this connection, a national survey was conducted by the

²³ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 467.

²⁴ M. Abul Fazal, *daily Dawn*, Karachi, January 16, 2011.

²⁵ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 507, 509—10.

Mexican government in collaboration with a United Nations agency in 1992; the survey revealed that at that time

37.2 million Mexicans (43.8 percent of the total population) [were] living at or below the official poverty line. An independent, academic study using official and private sector statistics found that from 1963 to 1981, before the shift to neoliberal economic policies, the proportion of Mexico's population living below the poverty line had dropped from 77.5 to 48.5 percent; however, from 1982 to 1992, the trend was reversed, with the poverty population rising to 66 percent.

The analysts wind up their analysis and write that

Whatever statistical base is used, it is clear that the new, market-oriented development model thus far has exacerbated—not alleviated—Mexico's poverty and inequality problems, ...without strong, sustained government action to correct for market failures and improve human capital endowments through education and job training, income concentration and related social problems will continue unabated.²⁶

Describing the salient features of such a Capitalist system, Dr. Abdul Karim writes: “...the more the better. ...There is no ethical constraint for the pursuit [for a maximum profit]. Selfishness and greed are not only tolerated but promoted. ...Equitable distribution of income and wealth is the least concern.”²⁷ Similarly, a write-up in the London based *The Guardian* portrays the dismal picture of Western Capitalism as “limping, wounded, carrying a heavy load of debt, inequality, demography, neglected infrastructure, social discontent and unrealistic expectations”.²⁸

Thus, it could be concluded that in a system wherein a few dominate the others, there will be constant mutual frictions, strained relations, rivalries, and antagonisms; the dominated will resent the hegemonic position of the few, and such resentment often surfaces in violent forms which lead to blood-shedding, target killings, sabotage and vandalism. Moreover, socio-economic disparities, concentration of wealth in a few hands,

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 510.

²⁷ *Daily Dawn*, Karachi, January 23, 2011.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, January 28, 2011.

monopoly of the chosen few over policy making, and the deteriorating law and order situation are the inescapable corollaries of such a system.

4.3 Gender-based Hegemony

The Pearl portrays a patriarchal, male-chauvinist society; herein we come across such a society wherein womenfolk are entirely on the mercy of their menfolk; the former are treated as mere appendage of the latter, or only as sub-humans. Juana has been doubly dominated: dominated by the bourgeoisie and dominated by Kino, her husband. She could be considered as a true representative of numberless “subalterns” who are constantly exploited for the vested interests of the few. As almost all human societies are patriarchal, women are the prime victims of the deeply-established male-chauvinism of the hard sex. They lead their drab lives under the perpetual unquestioned hegemony of the hard sex. In most of the cases, this hegemonic position of the hard sex manifests itself, especially in the Third World societies, in various violent forms, including domestic violence, physical attacks, mental torture, disinheritance, sexual harassment, rape, acid attacks, and to top it all, genital mutilations. We could observe in *The Pearl* that when Juana wants to throw the mysterious pearl back into the sea in order to get rid of its evil and “sinister” influence, Kino opposes her violently and he stoops to attack her physically:

He struck her in the face with his clenched fist and she fell among the boulders, and he kicked her in the side.... Kino looked down at her and his teeth were bared. He hissed at her like a snake, and Juana stared at him with wide unfrightened eyes, like a sheep before the butcher.²⁹

²⁹ *The Pearl*, 51—52.

In such patriarchal societies such violent attacks on women by their male kith and kin are considered as the latter's prerogative. They are considered best only for home and hearth:

Man for the field and woman for the hearth,
 Man for the sword and for the needle she,
 Man to command and woman to obey,
 All else confusion.³⁰

Almost all the patriarchal societies, worldwide without any exception, work on this line of "Man to command and woman to obey" in letter and spirit; consequently, women in these societies are treated as sub-human beings. Two deep-rooted practices of such societies amply reveal the anti-women attitudes of their respective menfolk: first, women are completely deprived of their choice to influence the selection of their life-partners; second, they are disinherited; hence, a two-fold robbery: robbery of expression in the former case and robbery of property in the latter case. As far as their marriages are concerned, in most of the cases they are pre-arranged behind the screen and later on imposed, often by surprise, on their daughters and sisters. For example, according to a research report of Islamabad-based *National Commission on the Status of Women* (NCSW)³¹, in Pakistan more than half (63.4 per cent) marriages are pre-arranged by the elders while only 2.25 per cent marriages are backed by the express consent of the bride. But the two interesting practices for a Marxist critic are that of *walver* (14.87 per cent in Pakistan) and *watta satta* (10.9 per cent); in the former case a payment is received; in other words, a bride price is received ("*walver*" is a Pushto word, means "bride-money"); in the latter case, exchange marriages are conducted; in

³⁰ Tennyson, *The Princess*

³¹ With the implementation of the 18th amendment in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, and the devolution plan associated therewith, the NCSW has been re-christened as "National Commission for Women" and thenceforward it has been attached with the Ministry of Human Rights.

other words, one bride is bartered for another bride, that is, it is a barter game. In both *walver* and *watta satta*, the bride is treated as a mere commodity of the free-market. Further statistics reveal that the rate of arranged marriages in Pakistani held Kashmir is 89 per cent, and in Sindh 88.5 percent; wherever involvement of bride price is concerned Baluchistan is at the top with 81.5 per cent; wherever exchange marriages or *watta satta* are concerned Gilgit (17.5 per cent) is at the top, followed by the Punjab (13.5 per cent). But the most appalling and the most anti-women practice is that of *swara*; in this practice a girl is given to the rival party as a compensation for the wrongdoings inflicted upon the latter; in other words, a daughter or a sister is made a scapegoat for the wrongdoings of her male relatives. A certain Myra Imran writes about the “barbaric custom” of *swara* in these words:

‘Swara’ is basically blood marriages, which take place between two families to end a family feud. The innocent girls, who is [sic] sometimes not more than four or five years old, are handed over to the enemies so that the menfolk who committed the crime can escape the punishment. These girls are usually treated worse than slaves throughout their lives although they are handed over under the pretence of marriage. They are abused in many ways and their human rights are grossly violated.³²

This practice is sporadic in all parts of Pakistan and is known as *Sang Chatti* in Sindh, *Vinni* in the Punjab, and *Arjani* in Baluchistan. In all these practices sometimes girls as young as four are married off without any compunction to men fifteen times

³² Daily *The News*, Islamabad, December 24, 2010. She has also reported the woes of a victim of *swara* who was forced for prostitution by her husband; the latter has also sold her three daughters; in another case, a *jirga* in District Dir Lower of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa decided, in August 2007, to give a three-year old girl to the rival party in order to “pay for her father’s illicit relations with a woman” of the rival party (*Ibid.*, September 9, 2007). In a third case, it was decided to give two minor girls, of five and seven, in *Swara* to the rival family to settle a land dispute in District Upper Dir (*Ibid.*). In a fourth case a *jirga* in District Buner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had decided to give two minor sisters to the rival family in order to settle an abduction case committed by the sisters’ uncle (Daily *Dawn*, Karachi, December 24, 2010). In a fifth case, a *panchayat* in Dera Ismail Khan decided to give a five-year old girl to the rival family in order to settle a rape case perpetrated by the girl’s uncle (*Ibid.*, January 15, 2011).

their age. The report of NCSW further reveals that in Baluchistan almost 100 per cent women are deprived of inheritance, while the Punjab with 97 per cent rate follows the suit in this practice. In Sindh province the disinheritance of women is solemnized in the form of their so-called marriages to the Holy Quran: in order to forestall the going out of the family fortune into the hands of a girl's in-laws, they fill the blank space in marriage certificate, meant for husband's name, with the word "Quran"; thereby a girl is pushed into spinsterhood. The country-wide overall ratio of women's disinheritance is 50.6 per cent. Another indicator reveals that women constitute 66.4 per cent of the work force in agriculture sector while only two per cent of them own land; similarly, around 70 per cent of the poverty-stricken people in the country are women.³³

Thanks to the hegemonic position of a class, a race, or a sex, such gross violations of human rights are not rare in other parts of the world, including the developed countries; in most of the cases, women, children, and the socially deprived—the subalterns—are the only victims subjected to the atrocities of those who enjoy a somewhat hegemonic position.

In conclusion it could be written that Juana's portraiture in *The Pearl* is thoroughly in line with the ground realities and her pitiable situation alludes to the miseries of millions others like her. Her description like "a sheep before the butcher" indicates their helpless and powerless position all over the world. The plight of Juana is neither specific only to the pages of the fiction, nor they are limited only to the described setting of *The Pearl*, the Mexican society. Such flagrant disregard for the fair sex's feelings could be observed

³³ National Commission on the Status of Women, Islamabad. Most of the figures and some of the facts were provided by Myra Imran and Delawar Jan Banori, contributors of *The News* in Islamabad and Dir respectively.

every where across the world; they have been beset by manifold socio-economic problems, both in pre-marital as well as in marital life. So the portraiture of Juana is a universal and realistic one, and it enhances the universality of the *novella*.

4.4 Religious Hegemony

The Pearl also depicts the world of clergymen and Steinbeck duly probes the depth of the Fathers' mentality; the Father has been depicted as a representative of the clergymen without any specific religion or sect, or any denomination thereof; consequently, whatever has been said about, or is being remarked about the Father of *The Pearl* could be extended to the entire syndicate of the clergy whether they are the Roman Catholics, the Protestants, the Jews, the Hindus, or the Muslims.

In order to understand the *Weltanschauung* or world-view of characters, whether in fiction or in life, some basic knowledge about their attitude towards religion might be helpful; religion is one of the factors, besides society, in perspective of which we can comprehend a man's actions. As far as *The Pearl* is concerned religion has been used as a redemptive power to ward off various plights of the wretched and to solace them. When Kino's baby is stung by a scorpion, "[u]nder her breath Juana [Kino's wife] repeated an ancient magic to guard against such evil, and on top of that she uttered a Hail Mary between clenched teeth".³⁴ Moreover, when Kino went underwater in search of a pearl, "Juana was making the magic of prayer"³⁵ in the canoe on the surface of water; but they also knew that "the pearls were accident, and the finding of one was luck, a little pat on the back by God or the gods or both".³⁶ Thus, inmates of the brush houses in *The Pearl*

³⁴ *The Pearl*, 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.* , 16.

³⁶ *Ibid.* , 15.

“are primitive and superstitious” believers on some transcendental agencies. “Thus it might be that the people of the Gulf trust things of the spirit”.³⁷ Though they do not neglect outright those transcendental agencies or paranormal forces, they hold themselves responsible for the consequences of their own lives. Therefore, it could be deduced that “religion, a mixture of paganism and Christianity in Kino’s life … is [a] little more than superstition, in no way affecting the outcome of [an] individual’s struggle”.³⁸

The priest’s title as “the Father” and his treatment of the people as his “children” establish a relationship of the dominant and the dominated; accordingly, the former assumes his authority or his hegemonic position over the latter, and in many conservative societies the laity is supposed not to question such hegemonic positions of the clergy. Moreover, “the Father” has exclusively occupied this position, that is, there is no mention of any mother-figure; hence, only the same sex prevails in the church. As there is a phallocentric system in the social life of Kino and his folk, the same system is there in the church; this leads us back to the gender-based hegemony. In this connection Karen Armstrong³⁹ has been reported and she writes that most of the world religions are indifferent to women; these religions emphasize only men “and women have been relegated to a marginal position”.⁴⁰ Feminists vehemently criticized the exclusion of

³⁷ *Ibid.* , 13.

³⁸ Samuel Scoville, The “Weltanschauung” of Steinbeck and Hemingway: An Analysis of Themes, *The English Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (National Council of Teachers of English, Jan. , 1967) 61.

³⁹ Karen Armstrong, born in 1944, is a London-based world renowned scholar; she works for world-wide interfaith harmony and has authored several books on religions. The authorship of almost twenty books goes to her credit; prominent among them are *Islam, A Short History; A History of God; The 4000-year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam; The Battle for God; Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths; Holy War: The Crusades and Their Impact on Today’s World; The Great Transformation: The Beginning of Our Religious Traditions; The Case for God*, and two biographies of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

⁴⁰ Harlambos and Halborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 5th ed. , 440.

women from key roles in the churches; as a result, the Anglican Church has to recognize the ordination and priesthood of women in 1992.⁴¹

The priest tries, as the doctor did, to convince Kino about the things which are not really in the books; both exploit Kino's ignorance and distort the facts; only thereby they could ensure their hegemony and ignorance of the masses will prolong it. Matthew Henry has aptly said that hypocrites do the devil's drudgery in Christ's livery⁴². Thus, the priest, the doctor, the shopkeepers, and the pearl-dealers are different facets of the same oppressive system that is out to deprive the down-trodden out of their meagre resources. Karsten dubs the priest as a dissembler and writes that the real motive for his visit is to swindle something out of Kino's sudden wealth; his entire excerpt runs as under:

[Apart from the doctor] Another dissembler is the priest, whom the news of the pearl has brought probably for the first time in many months to see what part of the wealth he can get for the Church. When he addresses these "children", he makes the words "sound like a benediction." Yet, in the sermon that he gives annually, he associates himself with the town's oppression and strengthens its parasitic stranglehold upon the community by sanctifying it. Like the doctor, at the news of the pearl, the priest reacts selfishly and emerges from behind the protective wall to raid the sudden new wealth of the community.⁴³

The brief appearance of the priest is pregnant with many implications and hidden meanings: first, though a representative of God to cater for the spiritual betterment of his "children", he associated himself with the new wealth of Kino and his personal desires brought about his rare visit to Kino's brush hut. Second, as the doctor was completely indifferent to Coyotito's poisoned shoulder when the baby's father was a penurious in the morning, the priest completely ignores Coyotito's problem and does not even refer to or

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Matthew Henry, *Best Quotations for All Occasions*, ed. Lewis C. Henry (New York: Fawcett Premier, 1989) 214.

⁴³ Ernest E. Karsten, 'Thematic Structure in *The Pearl*', published in *The English Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (Jan. , 1965) 5; published by National Council of Teachers of English.

mention the untoward incident; it means that he is completely absorbed in Kino's sudden prospect of wealth. Third, when he mentions Kino's namesake as "a great Father of the Church", it reveals his hypocrisy and his deceitful nature. Fourth, when he says that he has gotten such information from books, it means that most of the clergy exploit the ignorance of the laity and disinform them; thereby they try to enhance their hegemony and to sanctify their unquestioned authority; they use their books as an instrument to strengthen their hegemony therewith. Fifth, as a God's representative the Father should cater for his "children"'s spiritual advancement, but he "hold his services ransom, denying marriage and baptism to those who can not afford the price of his greed".⁴⁴ It means that he is one of the units that support the oppressive castle of Capitalism at the cost of depriving the down-trodden.

Since there is no representative of the state in *The Pearl*, the Father could be considered as a representative of the state as well. Wayne A. Cornelius and Jeffrey A. Weldon peep into the national history of Mexico and they describe that for sufficiently a long time both the church and the political high-ups remained collaborators of each other:

Since the Spanish conquest, the Roman Catholic Church has been an institution of enduring power in Mexico. Priests joined the Spanish invaders in an evangelical mission to promote conversion of the Indians to Catholicism, and individual priests have continued to play important roles in national history. ...The central church hierarchy—among the most conservative in Latin America—cooperated with the government on a variety of issues, and the church posed no threat to the ruling party's hegemony.⁴⁵

Thanks to their conservative views (see pp. 81—83 of this work), both the clergy and the monarchs used to join hands with each other to placate the rebellious tendencies of the masses. Marx and Engels aptly said that "the parson has ever gone hand in hand with

⁴⁴ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 109.

⁴⁵ Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 472.

the land lord”⁴⁶. Thanks to this marriage of convenience in the background, the landlords used to financially assist the church liberally and the church tried to quell the rising sentiments of its followers and forbade them “to leave their station”. Even Maduro, a neo-Marxist who entertains relatively lenient views towards religion, admits that

up until recently, Catholicism in Latin America [including the setting of *The Pearl*] tended to support the bourgeoisie and right-wing military dictatorships which have represented its interests. The Catholic Church has tended to deny the existence of social conflicts between oppressive and oppressed classes. It has recognized some injustices, such as poverty and illiteracy, ...⁴⁷

Thus, the Father’s remarks, reported by Kino, urge his “children” that “each one must remain faithful to his post” and they should jealously adhere to their respective stations “like a soldier sent by God”. It could be deduced that Steinbeck wants to dawn on the readers his own reservations towards the church as a religious institution; the priest wants to exploit Kino’s fortune and for this purpose he hoodwinks Kino but the most serious charge that a Marxist would label against him is that he “supports the monopoly of the pearl buyers by warning the fishermen to keep their places in life”⁴⁸; otherwise, divine punishment will be inflicted on those who try “to leave their station” or are “running about”. Thereby, the clergy discourage or dissuade the masses to rise against social stratification, economic injustices, exploitation of the down-trodden, and the oppression of the oppressors; they should not challenge the stability, rather they should harmonise themselves to the bottom of social stratification. Cynthia Burkhead has bracketed together all the agents of the oppressive system in the following words:

The dark intruders who come three times to steal Kino’s pearl and the three hunters who track Kino and Juana through the wilderness are the explicit manifestations of the implicit evil of the doctor, the priest, and

⁴⁶ Harlambos and Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 437.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* , 439.

⁴⁸ Samuel Scoville, *The “Weltanschauung” of Steinbeck and Hemingway: An Analysis of Themes*, 61.

the pearl buyers. They are the death and illness to which greed can lead.⁴⁹

Thus, religion, which is a component of the super-structure, is used to further enhance the hegemonic position of the chosen few.

4.5 Ideological State Apparatuses and the Repressive Structures

In every human society some institutions are considered as an integral part of the people's daily life and they are attached therewith through some channels. It includes religious, economic, legal, political, educational, and other state institutions. Some of these institutions become, with the passage of time, an integral part of the society concerned and hence they are considered deep-rooted and time-honoured in their social life. Individuals of the society concerned could become members of these institutions only if they could fulfil some qualifications, that is, most of these institutions have a qualified membership; for example Kino could not afford the charges of a ceremonious wedding or of a baptism for his baby Coyotito, so he has been denied such ceremonious services in the church; similarly, thanks to the strict racial segregation, Kino's and his brethren's sons (and daughters) could not join the schools wherein children of the local bourgeoisie read and learn; in the case of religious-cum-political institutions, if an individual does not conform himself or herself to the prevalent ideology, he or she will have to face excommunication or exile; consequently, with the passage of time most of these institutions turn into oppressive structures; their incumbents, due to their *ex officio* powers or authority, become corrupt and they stoop to witch-hunt their rivals. Hence, in most of the cases, these institutions lose the very soul or purpose of their establishment and they become tools and instruments in the hands of those who are at the helm of

⁴⁹ Burkhead, *Student Companion to John Steinbeck*, 109.

affairs. Such institutions are used as tools and instruments that are exploited for the justification, enhancement, and prolongation of the hegemonic and oppressive position of the few, especially the elite class (see pp. 22—24 of this work). Most of the Third World societies are replete with such undemocratic examples. That is why in their enthusiasm to establish a classless society purged of every kind of oppression, the Marxists want to abolish all kinds of such institutions.

Louis Althusser identified all such institutions that strengthen hegemony of the few over the masses. He christened these institutions as *repressive structures* and *Ideological State Apparatuses* or ISAs; the former include the standing army, the police force, the judicial system, prisons, and other law enforcement agencies; all these institutions resort to doses of force, time and again, and thereby they manifest the coercive aspect of the state. The latter includes the educational and religious institutions, the electronic and print media, political parties, family, and art and literature; they try to nourish, propagate, and inculcate a prescribed ideology and secure the sympathies and consent of the masses for such ideology; consequently, they promote socio-economic stability, ensure the *status quo*, discourage the masses to look askance at the traditional institutions and practices, or to rise for any sudden changes; rather, a Hobson's choice is imposed upon them; when *Ideological State Apparatuses* are backed by *repressive structures*, it leads to the prolongation of the hegemony of the chosen few over the masses.⁵⁰

The Pearl also depicts such institutions, though not in a graphic detail. First, when Kino and Juana, along with their neighbours, proceed towards the town to have the baby treated, they could hear "the singing of caged birds"⁵¹ which were there inside the palatial

⁵⁰ Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*, 164.

⁵¹ *The Pearl*, 7, 8.

houses of the townspeople. Concept of the cage here implies exploitation and restrictions; the townspeople have restricted and confined the innocent creatures to the cages; thanks to their melodious songs, they try to satisfy their own whims. Just as cages are misused for the confinement of birds, the prisons are misused for the confinement of humans; both are repressive structures and used for the confinement of various creatures; so they could be described, according to Althusser, as *repressive structures*. These *repressive structures* are used, as the name indicates, for the repression of others. Cages could be considered as the small replicas of prisons and other torture-cells. Victims of both the cages and the prisons imply an existent tense atmosphere; they point to two opposing forces: the dominant and the dominated; the former wants to maintain their hegemony upon the latter and cages or prisons are the tools, *inter alia*, of the former to satisfy their Machiavellian designs. Both cages and prisons are a manifest form of a coercive force that is used for the maintenance of a hegemonic position. As the 'townspeople have confined the aerial creatures, in the same manner they want to dominate Kino's race and consider them as their inferiors. In order to quell the dissidents, to force the non-conformists to join the mainstream, to curb activities of the rebellions, and to confine the rivals, many governments resort to such *repressive structures* as prisons, torture-cells, concentration camps, gas-chambers, etc.; such *repressive structures* are often misused for the maintenance of the hegemonic position of a certain clique. In the political history of Mexico, the reigns of certain dictators have been stigmatized due to the frequent misuse of such *repressive structures*; noteworthy among them, *inter alias*, are Porfirio Diaz (1887—1911), Adolfo Ruiz Cortinez (1952—58), and Gustavo Diaz Ordaz (1964—70); the first of them got sufficient notoriety for the suppression of his political rivals through

his own established “Diaz rural police force, the *Guardia Rurales*”; the second “severely repressed” protestations of railway workers and teachers in 1958; while the credit of killing “more than a hundred students” in a brutal crackdown in Mexico City during the 1968 Olympic games goes to the third one.⁵² A writer says that “[u]nder a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison”⁵³. Another writer has depicted the similarity between cages and prisons and the helplessness of their victims in these lines:

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage,
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage⁵⁴

An Islamabad-based paper, *The News*, reveals in its “Special Report”, published on March 14, 2010, that around 150 private torture-cells exist in Lahore; these torture-cells are used to extract confession from the detainees, under-trial prisoners, or suspects “in the name of investigation or interrogation”. More importantly, some of these torture-cells are provided by the local notables. Resultantly, the reverent paper quotes Amnesty International, every year more than 100 people are put to death because of the heavy-handedness of police in Pakistan. Another rights group, *Human Rights Commission of Pakistan*, reports in its annual report of 2007 that at least 147 victims underwent police brutalities; 65 among them succumbed to these brutalities. The paper further reports a former Inspector General of the Punjab Police, Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob, who duly ascribes the prevalent culture of police torture in Sindh and the Punjab to “the presence of feudal culture and local influentials”; *quod erat demonstrandum*.

⁵² Clare Collinson, Anna Farkas, *et al.* (eds) *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Modern Political Biography* (Oxford: Helicon Publishing Ltd., 1999) 120, 373.

⁵³ Thoreau, *Best Quotations for All Occasions*, 9th ed. Lewis C. Henry (New York: Fawcett Premier, 1989) 368.

⁵⁴ Lovelace, *ibid.*

The second institution that comes across in *The Pearl* is the church. Though the qualities associated with the Father, described in sections 3. 4 and 4.4, reveal the intrinsic nature of such institutions, it is one aspect of the matter: how the clergy deal the masses in day-to-day life. The other aspect is the role of such institutions—churches, mosques, temples, synagogues, whatever else may be—*per se*: it means how Marxists view such institutions theoretically. Althusser calls them as “the religious ISA (the system of different churches)”⁵⁵ and they are among the institutions that facilitate a Capitalist state to maintain its hegemonic position; such institutions foster, propagate, and inculcate a prescribed ideology the ultimate purpose of which is usually to ensure the *status quo* and to procure consent of the masses for the established traditional social order. Usually a church embraces all classes of a society, “but the upper classes are particularly likely to join. This is because, in Troeltsch’s words, a church usually ‘stabilizes and determines the political order’”⁵⁶. As there is no mention of any state agency in *The Pearl*, the church and the school, described in the next para, could be considered as proxy institutions for the state. Throughout the Mediaeval Ages churches had been strange bedfellows of the state, both in the West as well as in the East, and they reinforced each other in “important political, educational, and social” circles. Churches supported the prescribed ideology of the state; they are conservative like the state, and emphasise the socio-economic and political *status quo*. An author reports that “an opinion poll in 1988 found that 63 percent of active lay members of the Church of England supported the Conservative Party, which received only 43 percent of the total votes in the 1987 election”⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ Miliband, *Marxism and Politics*, 54.

⁵⁶ Harlambose and Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 453.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

The third institution that has been mentioned in *The Pearl* is the school. When Kino suddenly became a rich man somebody asked about his priorities (see p. 42), he replied that, *inter alia*, he would send his son to school. At the same time he imagined that his son Coyotito was “sitting at a little desk in a school, just as Kino had once seen it through an open door”⁵⁸. It means that throughout his life, Kino had been endowed only with a glimpse of a class room “through an open door”: to send their children to schools is a rare practice among Kino’s brethren; it is an amenity that could be availed only by the bourgeoisie. It means that in such societies even the process of teaching and learning has been commodified: only those who could afford the charges may send their children to schools.

Like the churches, Althusser described the schools as a series among the *Ideological State Apparatuses*; “the educational ISA (the system of the different public and private ‘Schools’)”.⁵⁹ These institutions also try to foster, propagate, and inculcate only a prescribed ideology. Ralph Miliband expresses his views in these words:

In Capitalist societies with bourgeois democratic regimes, ideological struggles are mainly waged in and through institutions which are not part of the state system ... Althusser’s notion of ‘Ideological State Apparatuses’ (ISAs), accordingly to which a vast number of institutions involved in one way or another in the dissemination of ideology are not only ‘ideological apparatuses’ but ‘state ideological apparatuses’, ...⁶⁰

The emergence of private schools and colleges in such societies has further driven the wedge between the-haves and the-have-nots. These private institutions cater only for the children of the bourgeoisie and the elite class; moreover, they produce such a generation that is highly class-conscious; resultantly, Kinos and their sons could afford only a glimpse of such institutions “through an open door”, if it is possible at all. Only a

⁵⁸ *The Pearl*, 23.

⁵⁹ Miliband, *Marxism and Politics*, 54.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

fraction of the population in such societies could afford to join them. According to a former provincial education minister of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the then North West Frontier Province, such private schools take care of only 19 per cent of the students in his province, while 77 per cent of the students have to join the state-run schools.⁶¹

As far as Mexican society, setting of *The Pearl*, is concerned, a tripartite system of schools could be noted: besides private institutions and state-run schools, a third tier of "Church-run private schools" reflects the class-ridden society. All these institutions play a vital role in the "mass political socialization" of the Mexican people: as Althusser has elaborated, most of these institutions have to toe the line drawn by the state. All these institutions are under obligation to teach a curriculum and a set of textbooks prescribed only by the Federal Ministry of Education; consequently, these prescribed curriculum and text-books are used by the government as "an instrument" or "apparatus" to inculcate only "a formal set of political values". Hence, it could be deduced that in the political system of Mexico "the schools and Catholic Church are important sources of preadult political learning".⁶² Apart from the tripartite indigenous system of schools, foreign top-class expensive universities, such as Harvard, Stanford, Yale, MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA), and the University of Chicago, are considered to be the feeder institutions for "recruiting the political elite" in Mexico. In deed, "[p]ostgraduate education, especially at elite foreign universities and in disciplines like economics and public administration, has become much more important as a ticket of entry into the national political elite".⁶³

⁶¹ The remaining 4 per cent are students of seminaries or *madrassahs*, (Meraj Humayun Khan in daily *The News*, Islamabad).

⁶² Gabriel A. Almond, *et al.*, *Comparative Politics Today*, 479—80.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 493.

Thus, it could be concluded that such institutions reflect two aspects of the Capitalist societies: first, as Althusser puts it, they are invariably exploited as “apparatuses”, tools, or instruments by the few to procure the consent of the masses for the propagation and inculcation of a prescribed ideology the ultimate purpose of which is to justify, maintain, and prolong the former’s hegemonic position. Second, the lack of uniformity among their structures and administrations—the state-run schools, the private schools, the Church-affiliated schools, the *madrassahs*—reveals the class-ridden structures of the parent societies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Identification of various hegemonic forms is the core issue in this thesis. To wind up, it could be said that *The Pearl* alludes to the *commitment* of Steinbeck: he has engaged himself to highlight the miserable life of the-have-nots. The entire story has been woven around four hegemonic structures: class hegemony, economic hegemony, gender-based hegemony, and religious hegemony. Every hegemonic structure could be easily discerned along with its accessories and victims. All the four hegemonic structures have been intertwined in such a subtle manner of style that the main plot—class division—provides a uniform cover-up for them; even a layman can distinguish them. To recapitulate, the following points are noteworthy in *The Pearl* as far as its Marxist interpretation is concerned:

First, an overt antagonism between Kino and the doctor could be observed; both represent their respective communities that are poles apart from each other. Second, the community of Kino and the townspeople are the other two charged poles of this antagonism; the former could be considered as the working class, the down-trodden, while the latter is the flourishing bourgeoisie; both the classes are poles apart as far as their social and economic conditions are concerned. One tries to flourish itself at the expense of the other. The above-mentioned both types of rivalries are the manifest aspects of antagonism between the two leading communities and their respective representatives; this makes the main theme of the *novella*. Third, the covert antagonism between the two sexes, especially in a patriarchal society, manifests itself when Kino

maltreats Juana. Fourth, the covert antagonism between the clergy and the masses could be perceived when the former pays a surprise visit to Kino's, treats the latter as his children, and wants to exploit Kino for his ignorance. Fifth, all such types of antagonism lead to a climax and end in a catastrophe when a scuffle follows between Kino and the three trackers at the end of the *novella*; eventually, five persons are killed in five days: on an average, one person is put to death, on the sole motive of possession or private property, every day. Sixth, intrigues of the open market could be observed in Chapter 4 of *The Pearl*; the pearl-dealers act as a cartel, *carte blanche*; herein various tactics of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat could easily be perceived. This is another aspect of the latent antagonism in the *novella*. Seventh, Steinbeck himself had to face various ups and downs before he became a flourishing writer; like Kino, he himself remained one of the working class or the proletariat during his younger years: he had a series of temporary jobs, including working as a ranch hand, an assistant chemist in a sugar refinery, a labourer in a road building gang, and above all, exactly like Kino, a fisherman in Monterey and as a labourer helping to build Madison Square Garden. So the socio-economic situation of the author is parallel to that of his hero, Kino. Eighth, as the *novella* describes various songs (song of the family, pp. 2, 4, 6, 21, 26, 30, 48, 61, 74, 78; song of the enemy or song of the evil, pp. 4, 5, 24, 25, 30, 32, 33, 44, 48, 54, 63, 67, 74; song of the Undersea, pp. 16, 35; and song of the Pearl, pp. 16, 17, 21, 22, 25, 35, 61, 63, 79), all these songs have been associated with the inner world of Kino, they depict a continuous flow of his thoughts, ideas, desires, and feelings; so *the stream of consciousness technique*, a hallmark of the modern twentieth-century novel, could easily be perceived in the *novella*. Ninth, the *novella* was written in such a period wherein the

ideas of a welfare state got momentum; as a welfare state champions the wellbeing of the masses, in the same manner, *The Pearl* highlights their socio-economic destitutions at the hands of the emerging bourgeoisie. Tenth, the *novella* was written immediately after World War II; it was a period wherein the bi-polar world came into existence: on one side there was the US-backed Capitalist countries; on the other, there was the Soviet-led Communist bloc; hostilities of both the super-powers, their diplomatic blame-games and, in certain areas of the world, their proxy wars characterized the Cold War era. Their rivalries led to the establishment of various organizations, treaties, *entente*, etc. in order to woo the support of maximum countries for their respective blocs and undermine or counter-attack each others hegemony therewith; the defunct WARSAW Pact and the still-existent NATO are worthy of mention in this connection. Moreover, the charges against Steinbeck as a Communist by his own compatriots are something that could easily politicize the subject-matter and themes of *The Pearl*.

All the four types of hegemony have been intertwined in a subtle manner and they have been portrayed as an integral part of a capitalist society. The elaborate portraiture of the class-ridden society of La Paz, the focus on Kino and his brethren's miseries, and the exposition of the bourgeoisie's heavy-handedness reveal Steinbeck's commitment as a writer of the Left wing. The narrator has spotlighted the class division and the racial conflict between the fishermen and the townspeople. He has revealed the miserable life of the down-trodden of La Paz; consequently, it could be concluded that he resents the capitalist set-up of the society concerned. The hegemonic position of the townspeople has been portrayed in such a manner that it embraces the other sub-structures—economic, gender-based, and religious—of the society concerned; so the resentment of hegemony

could be considered as a running theme of *The Pearl*. As the narrator has highlighted the same wretched position of the down-trodden in his other works, especially *In Dubious Battle* (1936), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), and *The Wayward Bus* (1947) (see pp. 51—52 of this work), so two points could be concluded: first, hegemony is the *leitmotif* of all these works, including *The Pearl*; second, the narrator wants to decry such a system wherein the down-trodden is constantly oppressed. Therefore, *ipso facto*, *The Pearl* is a handy tool in the hands of Steinbeck's critics to label him as a communist (see pp. 2, 52 of this work).

APPENDIX-A

“What Marxist critics do

1. “They make a division between the ‘overt’ (manifest or surface) and ‘covert’ (latent or hidden) content of a literary work (much as psychoanalytic critics do) and then relate the *covert* subject matter of the literary work to basic Marxist themes, such as class struggle, or the progression of society through various historical stages, such as, the transition from feudalism to industrial capitalism. Thus, the conflicts in *King Lear* might be read as being ‘really’ about the conflict of class interest between the rising class (the bourgeoisie) and the falling class (the feudal overlords).
2. “Another method used by Marxist critics is to relate the context of a work to the social-class status of the author. In such cases an assumption is made (which again is similar to those made by psychoanalytic critics) that the author is unaware of precisely what he or she is saying or revealing in the text.
3. “A third Marxist method is to explain the nature of a whole literary genre in terms of the social period which ‘produced’ it. For instance, *The Rise of the Novel*, by Ian Watt, relates the growth of the novel in the eighteenth century to the expansion of the middle classes during that period. The novel ‘speaks’ for this social class, just as, for instance, Tragedy ‘speaks for’ the monarchy and the nobility, and the Ballad ‘speaks for’ the rural and semi-urban ‘working class’.
4. “A fourth Marxist practice is to relate the literary work to the social assumptions of the time in which it is ‘consumed’, a strategy which is used particularly in the later variant of Marxist criticism known as cultural materialism.
5. “A fifth Marxist practice is the ‘politicization of literary form’, that is, the claim that literary forms are themselves determined by political circumstance. For instance, in the view of some critics, literary realism carries with it an implicit validation of conservative social structures: for others, the formal and metrical intricacies of the sonnet and iambic pentameter are a counterpart of social stability, decorum, and order.”¹

¹ Peter Barry, *Begning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Manchester University Press, 2002), 167—68.

- 1 **Leninist Marxism or "Vulgar Marxism":**
Hard and fast rules were prescribed for writers; their works would have to reflect only the "Socialist Realism"
- 2 **Engelsian Marxism or Russian Formalism:**
(1920s)
 - * **Main tenets.**
 - * *Syuzhet* (Plot): the order and manner in which events take place in a narrative.
 - * *Fabula* (Story): the chronological sequence of events.
 - * **Defamiliarization**
 - * The contents of a poem are subordinate to its formal devices.
 - * The writer is unimportant**Key Figures:**
 - (1) Victor Shklovsky, Russian
 - (2) Boris Tomashevsky, Russian
 - (3) Boris Eichenbaum, Russian
 - (4) Mikhail Bakhtin, Russian
 - (5) Catherine Besley, Britain
 - (6) Terry Eagleton, Britain
 - (7) Fredric Jameson, America
 - (8) Antonio Gramsci, Italian
 - (9) Christopher Caudwell
 - (10) George Steiner.



- **Frankfurt School of Marxist Aesthetics (1923), Germany**
 - * They tried to combine Freud & Marx & aspects of Formalism
 - Key Figures:**
 - 1) Walter Benjamin, German
 - 2) Herbert Marcuse, German
 - 3) Theodor Adorno, German
- **Prague School of Linguistics (1920).**

They were influenced by Formalism & worked on phonology wherein "sounds are analysed in sets of oppositions"

Key Figures:
 - 1) Roman Jakobson (1896 - 1982)
 - 2) René Wellek
- **Structuralism (Originated in France in the 1950s)**
 - * Arrived in Britain and America in the 1970s
 - * To move from the particular to the general.
 - * To place the individual work within a wider structural context.**Key Figures:**
 - 1) Claude Levi Strauss (1908-), French
 - 2) Roland Barthes (1915-80), French
 - 3) Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), Swiss
 - 4) Jonathan Culler, American
 - 5) Terence Hawkes, Britain
 - 6) Frank Kermode, Britain
 - 7) David Lodge, Britain
- **New Criticism (1970s)**
 - * Close reading and detail textual analysis of poetry**Key Figures:**
 - 1) John Crowe Ransom,
 - 2) Allen Tate
 - 3) Robert Penn Warren
 - 4) Cleanth Brooks
- **"Alienation Effects" in Drama**
 - * The actors should distance themselves from their roles
 - * Play is only a representation of reality
 - * Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), German, is the key figure
- **Althusserian School of the Present Marxism, Louis Althusser (1918-1990)**

Over determinism, Relative Autonomy, Ideology, Decentring, *Repressive Structures, Ideological State Apparatuses, Interpellation*

APPENDIX-B**Works by John Steinbeck****Fiction:**

Cup of Gold (1929)
The Pastures of Heaven (1932)
To a God Unknown (1933)
Tortilla Flat (1935)
In Dubious Battle (1936)
Of Mice and Men (1937)
The Long Valley (1938)
The Grapes of Wrath (1939)
The Moon is Down (1942)
Cannery Row (1945)
The Red Pony (1945)
The Pearl (1945)
The Wayward Bus (1947)
Burning Bright (1950)
East of Eden (1952)
Sweet Thursday (1954)
The Short Reign of Pippin IV (1957)
The Winter of Our Discontent (1961)

Non-fiction:

Their Blood is Strong (1938)
Sea of Cortez (1941)
Bombs Away (1942)
A Russian Journal (1948)
The Log from the Sea of Cortez (1951)
Once There Was a War (1958)
Travels with Charley in Search of America (1962)
America and Americans (1966)

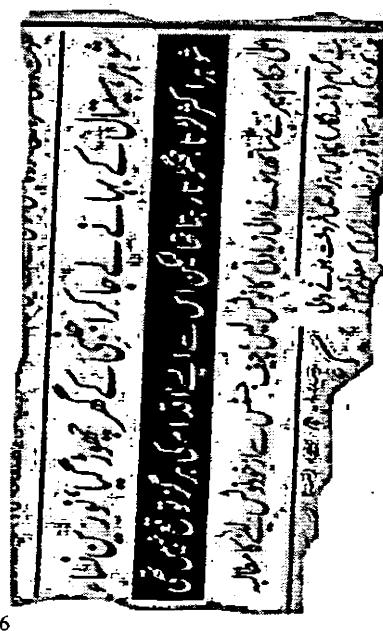
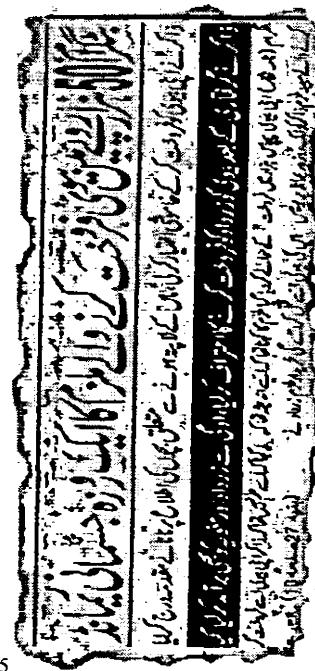
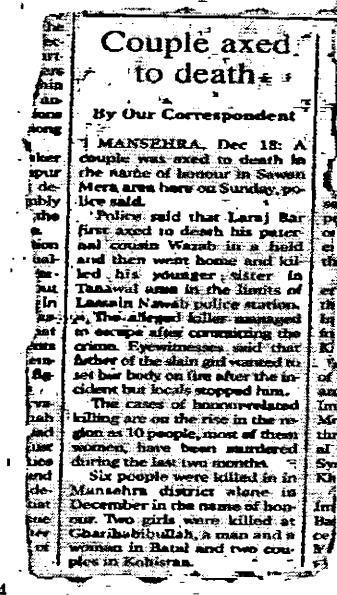
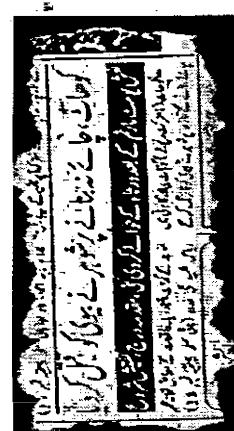
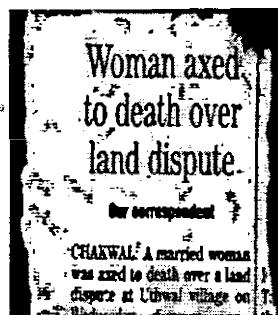
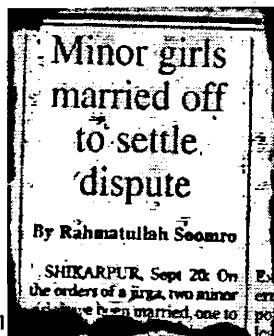
Post-humous Publications:

Journal of A Novel: The "East of Eden" Letters (1969)
Steinbeck: A Life in Letters (1969, 1975)
Viva Zapata! (1975)
The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights (1976)
Working Days: The Journals of the Grapes of Wrath (1989)

APPENDIX-C

"O Judgment! Thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there...,
And I must pause, till it come back to me." (*Julius Caesar*, III, 2)

The following press cuttings, taken from various national and local dailies, indicate the deep-rooted hegemony of the hard sex over fair sex.



¹ Daily Dawn, Karachi, September 21, 2010.

² Daily The News, Islamabad, November 4, 2010.

³ Daily Ausaf, Islamabad, November 5, 2010.

⁴ Daily Dawn, Karachi, December 18, 2010.

⁵ Daily Mashriq, Peshawar, December 22, 2010.

⁶ Ibid.

کاری میں 70 سال خاتون کو
باندھ کر زندہ چلا دیا گیا

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10

Girl electrocuted on Punchayat's whim

By Major Gill

BAJAWALPUR, Jan 22: A 20-year-old girl was electrocuted by her relatives on the order of a Punchayat in the name of honour in a village near Musafirkhana town, Sialkot. Here, it was learned on Saturday.

According to police, Saima of Bari Hakka, allegedly eloped with a village boy, Dilawar, who works in Karachi.

Her parents brought her back from Karachi on Friday morning and reportedly strangled her at night after the Punchayat, mostly comprising relatives, ordered that she be executed.

Police sources said the girl died by taking pesticides.

The body was taken to the Mubarakpur Rural Health Centre for post-mortem. As the X-ray machine of the RHC was out of order, the body was sent to Chiniot for X-ray. The X-ray was carried out, and the girl's body was brought back to Mubarakpur where an autopsy was carried out.

District police officer Babar Baloch Qureshi said the actual cause of death would be known after a chemical examiner's report. However, he said that the initial autopsy carried out by a lady doctor suggested that Saima had

Two teenage girls killed by 'addict' father

By Imraan Ayub

KARACHI, Jan 22: A drug addict killed his two teenage daughters and wounded his wife and another daughter inside their house in Sardar Goth on Saturday after the family refused to give him money, police and ~~family~~ sources said.

after sunrise and the police were informed by some neighbours who reached the crime-scene after hearing gunshots.

curt guard at the National Police Foundation but was dismissed due to drug addiction.

The official said that a funk-
en 25mm pulled out his two
unloaded pistols and fired
indiscriminately at his friends.
The bullets hit Maria and
Dereka in the head and up-
per torso and they died im-
mediately. Though Richter said

ties had already been under stress for the past few years as a result of Zamir's addiction and his wife said that he kept demanding money.

"During initial investigations we have found that the suspect is a drug addict and lost his job because of poor performance. His allegations against his family needed to be investigated," he added.

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⁷ Daily *The News*, Islamabad, January 1, 2011.

⁸ *Daily Dawn*, Karachi, January 7, 2011.

⁹ Daily *Aaj*, Peshawar. January 20, 2011.

¹⁰ Daily Dawn, Karachi, January 23, 2011.

11 *Ibid.*

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