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**SUBALTERNITY IN JOHN STEINBECK'S THE PEARL: A
GRAMSCIAN PERSPECTIVE**



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Abstract

*The study investigates the idea of subalternity in *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck using a Gramscian approach. The research is qualitative, exploratory and interpretative, with a hermeneutic textual analysis used to analyze the selected text. The research draws from Antonio Gramsci's concept of subalternity and cultural hegemony as elaborated in his *Prison Notebooks* to examine how the subaltern groups are silenced and marginalized in a capitalist and colonial context. The analysis shows, that the novella clearly outlines the contrast between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, in which the bourgeoisie is dominant in terms of economy, society, culture and ideology. The doctor, the priest and the pearl dealers are the people of the hegemonic class, and Kino and his community are the people of the subaltern class. The results point to several aspects of being a subaltern, such as unequal access to education, unequal access to healthcare, racial discrimination, social exclusion, and economic deprivation and psychological inferiority. Moreover, the study exemplifies the hegemonic manipulation of institutions and the discourse to perpetuate inequality and keep the marginalized in a state of subservient domination. Kino's resistance and entrapment is a testament to the oppressive system, and in the end, to the limits of subaltern agency. The horrendous final result is a warning of the devastating effects of hegemony. Finally, the study finds that 'The Pearl' is a potent literary expression of Gramscian subalternity that depicts the oppression of the proletariat at the hands of the bourgeoisie in various aspects of human life.*

Key Words: *The Pearl, Subalternity, Antonio Gramsci, Hegemony, Bourgeois, Proletariat.*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The current research work explores the elements of subalternity in the novel *The Pearl* by an American novelist John Steinbeck. The main purpose of the research work is to highlight the miserable conditions of the working class i.e. proletariat at the hands of the dominant class i.e. bourgeois. In a capitalist society the elites are always exploiting the lower classes. The current research study highlights these conditions in Bolivia a South American country. The western colonizers are exploiting the aboriginals, Red Indians in the village of La Paz Bolivia.

John Steinbeck, the author of *The Pearl*

John Steinbeck born on February 27, 1902 in Salinas California, he was an American author and the 1962 Nobel Prize in literature winner, for his realistic and imaginative writings. He has been called a giant of American letters. His occupation was as novelist, short story writer and war correspondent. Steinbeck graduated from Salinas high school in 1919, for the next six years he attended Stanford University on and off but never took a degree. His first published stories were in

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Stanford literary magazine. His notable works are *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), *East of Eden* (1952), *The Red Pony* (1933), *Tortilla Flat* (1935), and *Cannery Row* (1945). His spouses are Carol Henning, Gwyn Conger and Elaine Scott. He had two children named Tom and John. Most of Steinbeck's work is set in central California, particularly in the Salinas Valley and The California Coast Ranges region. His works frequently explored the themes of Fate and Injustice. He died on December 20, 1968 (aged 66) in New York City US.

Plot of *The Pearl*

Kino, a young pearl diver in La Paz, enjoys his simple life until the day his son, Coyotito, is stung by a scorpion. The wealthy town doctor will not treat the baby because Kino cannot pay the doctor's fee, so Kino and his wife, Juana, are left only to hope their child is saved. That day Kino goes diving, and finds a great pearl, the Pearl of the World, and knows he is suddenly a wealthy man. The word travels quickly about the pearl and many in the town begin to plot ways to steal it. While the townspeople plot against Kino, he dreams of marrying Juana in a church, buying a rifle, and sending Coyotito to school so that he can learn to read. Kino believes that an education will free his son from the poverty and ignorance that have oppressed their people for more than four hundred years. The doctor comes to treat Coyotito once he learns of Kino's pearl, and although the baby is healed by Juana's remedy, the doctor takes advantage of Kino's ignorance. He convinces Kino that the child is still ill and will die without the care of doctor. The doctor then manipulates Kino into unwittingly revealing where he has hidden the great pearl. Kino moves the pearl when the doctor leaves. That night, an intruder comes into Kino's hut and roots around near the spot where Kino had first buried the pearl. The next day, Kino tries to sell the pearl in town. The pearl buyers have already planned to convince Kino that the great pearl he has found is worth very little because it is too large. This way they can purchase the pearl for a low price. But when the buyers try to cheat Kino, he refuses to sell the pearl and plans to travel to another city to sell it a fair price. His brother, Tom Juan, feels Kino's plan is foolish because it defies his entire way of life and puts his family in danger. Kino is now on his own, although he does not know it yet. Juana warns Kino that the pearl is evil and will destroy his family, but he refuses to throw it away because it is his one chance to provide a different life style family. That night, Juana takes the pearl and tries to throw it into the sea, but Kino stops her and beats her. On his way back to their hut, Kino is attacked and he kills the man in self-defense. Juana goes to gather their things and escape and finds the floor of their hut completely dug up. While she's inside the hut getting the baby, someone lights it on fire. Kino, Juana and Coyotito hide with Kino's brother for a day before embarking on their journey to a new city under the cover of darkness. While they are resting during the day, Kino discovers that there are trackers following them. He knows that they will steal the pearl and kill his family if they catch them. To escape, Kino and Juana take the baby and run to the mountains where they hide in a cave at nightfall. The trackers camp just below the ridge where they are hiding. Kino sneaks down in the night to kill the trackers, but before he can attack them, Coyotito cries out. The trackers, thinking it's a coyote, shoot at the dark cave where Juana and Coyotito are hiding. As the shot is fired, Kino springs on the trackers and kills them all. Unfortunately, Coyotito was killed by the first gunshot, and Kino's journey with the pearl ends in tragedy. Realizing that the pearl is cursed and has destroyed his family (as Juana forewarned), Kino and Juana return to La Paz and throw the cursed pearl into the sea.

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Statement of the Problem

Every society has people of different social status. In a capitalist society there are two types of people known as haves and haves-not. Haves are also known as bourgeoisie and haves-not are known as proletariats. The lives of proletariats are very miserable at the hands of bourgeoisie because they are exploited. In the selected novel *The Pearl* the pearl divers, proletariats, are exploited by the pearl dealers, bourgeoisie.

Objectives of the Study

- To explore the text of the selected novel for the elements of subalternity.
- To explore the nature of different characters i.e. bourgeoisie and proletariats.
- To judge the characters on the basis of the theory of subalternity by Antonio Gramsci.

Research Questions

Q.1 How far the text of the selected novel expresses the element of subalternity propagated by Antonio Gramsci?

Q.2 Which characters do represent bourgeois class and which ones the proletariat one?

Q.3. How the proletariats are made subaltern by the bourgeoisie?

Rationale for the Study

Various studies have been conducted on various dimensions of the novel. The literature review of the current research work mentions the areas of the novel explored by the previous researchers. There is no previous study on this novel from the Gramscian perspective of subalternity. The researchers will try to explore this area.

Significance of the Research

This research work will add to the existing knowledge on this novel. It will also highlight the miserable conditions of the oppressed and exploited masses of the Latin America. This is also partial fulfillment for the award of BS degree. The readers will have a rich reading experience. It will prove as an insight and guidance for the future generations of researchers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of the chapter

This chapter covers the previous research conducted by other researchers on the selected novel from other angles. This chapter also covers the various terms i.e. constructs which make the basic fabric of the study.

Related Literature

Abbas, A. (2014) has shown Social Criticism of Indian in the pearl novel. The novel is concerned with social criticism on the disturbance of the Indians' life in South America. It shows the unjustifiable treatment of European immigrants. It depicts the fragile social, political and economic conditions of South America's people.

Agustin, I. T. W. (2008) has approached the novel *The Pearl* from Marxist perspective and has highlighted the miseries of the low class Indians by the maltreatment of high class of colonizers. He has concluded that just like the real life the literary work is a mouth piece for highlighting the

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discrimination received by the lower classes.

Burnett, A. (1965) has expressed an allegory reflecting Hinduistic beliefs. A development from animism through primitivism and pantheism to Hinduistic concept of being. He says that people are themselves pearls beyond price. It is an enduring and striking novel of men and women and good and evil.

Ganieva, O. K. (2020) has compared the novel *The Pearl* with the “Mukaddas” and has explored the similarities in both these novels. Both the writers are realist and they have showed that in a colonized countries the poor are exploited by the rich. The poor have no hope for future. The themes of family, greed, apathy, betrayal, corruption are found in both the novels.

Subekti, A. S. (2017) has expressed the power which the rich has over the poor. Those who were in power silenced those who were poor. The poor had no opportunity of health nor of education. The male member have dominance over the silenced female member of the family.

Wati, B. S. A. (2019) has explored the role played Kino’s wife Juana. He has concluded that Juana has a sound mind and has been a source of guidance for her husband. She tells him to destroy the pearl because it will destroy them. She was right but she was not obeyed.

The concept of subalternity has been widely explored in literary and cultural studies, particularly in relation to power structures, marginalization, and resistance. Rooted in the work of Antonio Gramsci, subalternity refers to groups that exist outside the hegemonic power structure and are subjected to domination by ruling classes (Gramsci, 1971). Gramsci’s theory of cultural hegemony explains how the bourgeoisie maintains control not only through economic and political means but also by shaping ideology and consent. His *Prison Notebooks* provide the foundational framework for analyzing how subaltern classes internalize oppression and remain marginalized within dominant social systems.

Building on Gramsci’s ideas, subaltern studies scholars such as Ranajit Guha (1982) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) expanded the concept to colonial and postcolonial contexts. Spivak’s seminal essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” highlights the silencing of marginalized voices and questions whether subaltern groups can truly express themselves within dominant discourses. This theoretical expansion is particularly relevant when examining literary texts that portray oppressed communities, as it foregrounds issues of representation, voice, and agency.

In the context of American literature, John Steinbeck’s works have frequently been analyzed through Marxist and socio-economic lenses. Critics such as Lisca (1978) and Owens (1985) emphasize Steinbeck’s concern with class struggle, poverty, and human suffering. *The Pearl* (1947), in particular, reflects the exploitation of indigenous and lower-class communities by colonial and capitalist forces. The novella portrays the life of Kino, a poor pearl diver, whose discovery of a valuable pearl exposes him to systemic oppression, greed, and violence.

Several scholars have examined *The Pearl* as a critique of capitalist exploitation. French (1961) argues that the novel demonstrates how material wealth corrupts human values and reinforces class divisions. Similarly, Astro (1973) notes that Steinbeck presents a deterministic view of society, where individuals from lower classes are trapped within oppressive socio-economic structures. These interpretations align with Gramsci’s notion of hegemony, where dominant groups maintain power by normalizing inequality.

From a postcolonial perspective, critics have highlighted the racial and cultural dimensions of subalternity in *The Pearl*. Shillinglaw (2006) observes that the indigenous community in the novella is marginalized not only economically but also culturally, as their traditions and knowledge systems

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are devalued by colonial authority. This reflects Spivak's argument about the epistemic violence inflicted upon subaltern groups, where their voices are suppressed or distorted within dominant narratives.

Furthermore, the role of ideology in perpetuating subalternity is evident in the institutional structures depicted in the novella. The doctor, the priest, and the pearl buyers represent the hegemonic apparatus that exploits Kino and his community. According to Eagleton (1991), ideology functions as a tool of domination by shaping perceptions and justifying inequality. In *The Pearl*, these institutions manipulate Kino's aspirations and reinforce his subordinate position, illustrating Gramsci's concept of consent-based domination.

Recent studies have also focused on the psychological dimension of subalternity. Althusser's (1971) theory of ideological state apparatuses provides insight into how individuals internalize dominant ideologies. Kino's transformation throughout the narrative reflects the psychological impact of oppression and the struggle for agency. His eventual rejection of the pearl can be interpreted as an act of resistance against hegemonic forces, although it also underscores the limitations of subaltern agency.

In summary, the existing literature demonstrates that *The Pearl* serves as a powerful representation of subalternity, encompassing economic, racial, cultural, and psychological dimensions. By applying a Gramscian framework, this study situates the novella within broader discussions of hegemony and class struggle. The reviewed scholarship provides a strong theoretical and critical foundation for analyzing how Steinbeck portrays the marginalization and resistance of subaltern groups.

Various constructs of the study explained

The following are the main constructs of the study which are explained in the lines to follow

Bourgeois

The bourgeois is a sociologically defined social class, equivalent to the middle or upper middle class. They are distinguished from, and traditionally contrasted with, the proletariat by their affluence, and their great culture and financial capital. They are sometimes divided into a petty (*petite*), middle (*moyenne*), large (*grande*), upper (*haute*), and ancient (*ancienne*) bourgeoisie and collectively designated as "the bourgeoisie".

The bourgeoisie in its original sense is intimately linked to the existence of cities recognized as such by their urban charters (e.g., municipal charters, town privileges, German town law), so there was no bourgeoisie apart from the citizenry of the cities. Rural peasants came under a different legal system.

In Marxist philosophy, the bourgeoisie is the social class that came to own the means of production during modern industrialization and whose societal concerns are the value of property and the preservation of capital to ensure the perpetuation of their economic supremacy in society.

Proletariat

The proletariat from Latin *proletarius* is the social class of wage-earners, those members of a society whose only possession of significant economic value is their labour power. A member of such a class is a proletarian. Marxist philosophy considers the proletariat to be exploited under capitalism, forced to accept meager wages in return for operating the means of production, which belong to the class of business owners, the bourgeoisie.

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Marx argued that this oppression gives the proletariat common economic and political interest that transcend national boundaries impelling them to unite and take over power from capitalist class, and eventually to create a communist society free from class distinctions.

Toynbee, A. J. especially in his *A Study of History*, uses the word “proletariat” in this general sense of people without property or a stake in society. Toynbee focuses particularly on the generative spiritual life of the “internal proletariat” (those living within a given civil society). He also describes the “heroic” folk legends of the “external proletariat” (poorer groups living outside the borders of a civilization). Compare Toynbee, *A Society of History* (Oxford University 1934-1961), 12 volumes, in volume V *Disintegration of Civilizations*, part one (1939) at 58-194 (internal proletariat), and at 194-337 (external proletariat).

Hegemony

Hegemony is the political, economic, and military predominance of one state over other states. In Ancient Greece (8th c. BC – AD 6th c.), hegemony denoted politico-military dominance of the hegemon city-state over the city-states. In the 19th century, hegemony denoted the “social or cultural predominance or ascendancy; predominance by one group within a society or milieu” and “a group or regime which exerts undue influence within a society”.

In cultural imperialism, the leader state dictates the internal politics and the societal character of the subordinate states that constitute the hegemonic sphere of influence, either by an internal, sponsored government or by an external, installed government. The term *hegemonism* denoted the geopolitical and the cultural predominance of one country over the other countries, e.g. the hegemony of the *Great Powers* established with *European colonialism* in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

In Marxist philosophy, Antonio Gramsci defined cultural hegemony as the ruling class’s manipulation of the value system and mores of the society, so that the ruling class perspective is the world view of society; thus, in the relation among the social classes of a society, the term *hegemony* describes the cultural dominance of ruling class, which compels the subordination of the other social classes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Nature of the research study

This research work is qualitative, exploratory and interpretative in nature. The text of the selected novel will be explored through textual analysis for finding the element of subalternity by applying the Gramscian theory.

Object of the study

The novel by John Steinbeck, *The Pearl* is to be the object of the study. The text of the novel is the main focus of this research work.

Method of Research

Textual analysis, i.e. hermeneutics, is the method for exploring the text of the selected novel for the element of subalternity. The text of the selected novel is explored through textual analysis for finding the elements of subalternity by applying the Gramscian theory.

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Theoretical Framework

Antonio Francesco Gramsci (22 January 1891 – 27 April 1937) was an Italian Marxist philosopher, journalist, linguist, writer, and politician. He wrote on philosophy, political theory, sociology, history, and linguistics. He was a founding member and one-time leader of the Communist Party of Italy. A vocal critic of Benito Mussolini and fascism, he was imprisoned in 1926 where he remained until his death in 1937. Gramsci wrote more than 30 notebooks and 3,000 pages of history and analysis during his imprisonment. His *Prison Notebooks* are considered a highly original contribution to 20th-century political theory. In *Prison Notebook 25* he has used the term Subaltern for the first time for the working class i.e. proletariat. Antonio Gramsci coined the term *subaltern* to identify the cultural hegemony that excludes and displaces specific people and social groups from the socio-economic institutions of society, in order to deny their agency and voices in colonial politics. As a method of investigation and analysis of the political role of subaltern populations, Karl Marx's theory of history presents colonial history from the perspective of the proletariat; that the *who?* and the *what?* of social class are determined by the economic relations among the social classes of a society. Antonio Gramsci holds that the working classes are exploited economically by the middle class through cultural hegemony due to which the proletariat never gain any high position in the society. Similar picture has been shown in the selected novel *The Pearl*. The theory of subaltern by Antonio Gramsci will be the theoretical framework of the current research work.

DATA ANALYSIS

Overview of the chapter

This chapter covers the data taken from the text of the selected novel *The Pearl* by An American novelist John Steinbeck. The purpose of this exploration is to search for the element of subalternity in the selected novel in the light of the theory presented by a Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci. The data is analyzed through close reading (hermeneutics).

Textual Analysis Chapter 1

The following excerpt is taken from the selected novel *The Pearl* page 7.

"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 take care of the rich people who lived in the stone and plaster houses of the town?"

"He would not come," the people in the yard said.

"He would not come," the people in the door said, and the thought got into Kino.

"The doctor would not come," Kino said to Juana. (Chapter 1 p. 07)

Analysis: The above text depicts the class division on the basis of geographical location between the upper and lower class. The upper class represented by doctor and his people resides in an area where the houses are made of plaster and stone. On the other hand the poor people represented by Kino and his people live in brush houses.

There is psychological inferiority complex in the poor people as they say that the doctor would not visit this area as he only visits the people in the stone and plaster houses.

They came to the place where the brush houses stopped and the city of stone and plaster began, the

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city of harsh outer walls and inner cool gardens where a little water played and the bougainvillea crusted the walls with purple and brick-red and white.(Chapter 1 p. 08)

Analysis:The above text depicts the class division on the basis of geographical location between the upper and lower class. The upper class represented by doctor and his people resides in an area where the houses are made of plaster and stone. On the other hand the poor people represented by Kino and his people live in brush houses.

And the newcomers, particularly the beggars from the front of the church who 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 and went along to see what kind of drama might develop. The four beggars in front of the church knew everything in the town. (Chapter 1 p.9)

Analysis: The above text depicts the poor physical appearance of the proletariat class of Kino. The beggars in front of the church appreciated the conditions of their clothes and classed them as poor. The subalternity of their physical conditions is evident.

Kino hesitated a moment. 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 all of the doctor's race spoke to all of Kino's race as though they were simple animals. And as Kino raised his right hand to the iron ring knocker in the gate, rage swelled in him, and the pounding music of the enemy beat in his ears, and his lips drew tight against his teeth - but with his left hand he reached to take off his hat. The iron ring pounded against the gate. Kino took off his hat and stood waiting. (Chapter 1 p.9-10)

Analysis: The above text demonstrates the psychological, ancestral and social subalternity of lower class of Kino. The Kino race were under the command of doctor's race from centuries and they were threatened and beaten by them. And because of it they have indulged the slavery within themselves.

The man who looked out at him was one of his own race. Kino spoke to him in the old language. "The little one - the firstborn - has been poisoned by the scorpion," Kino said. "He requires the skill of the healer." (Chapter 1 p.10)

Analysis: The above text shows psychological, social and language subalternity of proletariat class of Kino. The language spoken by upper class were different from that of lower class. And because of inferiority they cannot go straight to the doctor.

The gate closed a little, and the servant refused to speak in the old language. "A little moment," he said. "I go to inform myself," and he closed the gate and slid the bolt home. The glaring sun threw the bunched shadows of the people blackly on the white wall.(Chapter 1 p.10)

Analysis: The above text illustrates language and social inferiority of proletariat class of Kino. Because they cannot speak directly or without permission with their master. Closing of the gate shows antipathy of bourgeois for proletariat.

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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 stout, and 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. The furnishings of the room were heavy and dark and gloomy. (Chapter 1 p.10-11)

Analysis: The above text typify the luxurious and bourgeois class of doctor. The dressing-gown, watered silk, silver tray and chocolate pot, egg-shell appreciates him wealthy and bourgeois. The ignorant behavior of doctor represents his hate for proletariat. A hate of upper class for lower class, which is a sign of subalternity.

The servant from the gate came to the open door and stood waiting to be noticed.

"Yes?" the doctor asked.

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

The doctor put his cup down gently before he let his anger rise.

"Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for 'little Indians'? I am a doctor, not a veterinary." (Chapter 1 p.11)

Analysis: The above text portrays social and psychological subalternity of Kino. The calmness of servant shows the proletariat class of Kino. The word "little" is used for the adult Kino, though he is not little but Kino is despised literally. The doctor considers the race of Kino as animals by using the word "veterinary".

"The doctor has gone out," he said. "He was called to a serious case." And he shut the gate quickly out of shame.

And now a wave of shame went over the whole procession. They melted away. (Chapter 1 p.12)

Analysis: Coyotito was not treated by the doctor as he knew they had no money. There was neither any value of, nor sympathy for, them.

Text Analysis Chapter 2

Kino and Juana came slowly down to the beach and to Kino's canoe, which was the one thing of value he owned in the world. It was very old. Kino's grandfather had brought it from Nayarit, and he had given it to Kino's father, and so it had come to Kino. It 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. (Chapter 2 p.14)

Analysis: The above passage shows economic subalternity of Kino. There was no other source of earning but just this one canoe. They were secluded from other kind of businesses.

She 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 didn't cost anything. (Chapter 2 p.15)

Analysis: It shows medical and economical subalternity of Kino. They had neither money, nor

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proper dose, for baby treatment. Juana's made remedy worked for little time because it was not a valuable one.

Text Analysis Chapter 3

"It is as I thought," he said. "The poison has gone inwards and it will strike soon. Come look!" He held the eyelid down. "See - it is blue." And Kino, looking anxiously, saw that indeed it was a little blue. And he didn't know whether or not it was always a little blue. But the trap was set. He couldn't take the chance.(Chapter 3 p.30)

Analysis: The above passage shows educational subalternity of Kino. Kino did not know about the remedy of doctor but he believed just for the sake of Coyotito's life.

The doctor was closing his bag now. He said, "When do you think you can pay this bill?" He said it even kindly." When I have sold my pearl I will pay you," Kino said, "You have a pearl? A good pearl?" the doctor asked with interest.(Chapter 3 p.35)

Analysis: Kino's inability of not paying the doctor's fee shows economic subalternity. The interest of doctor in pearl shows that he had come for it not for baby's treatment.

Text Analysis Chapter 4

Juan Tomás cautioned his brother. "You must be careful to see they do not cheat you," he said. And: "Very careful," Kino agreed. "We do not know what prices are paid in other places," said Juan Tomás. "How can we know what is a fair price, if we do not know what the pearl buyer gets for the pearl in another place."(Chapter 4 p.43-44)

Analysis: Tomás's caution to Kino illustrates business subalternity of Kino's people. Rarely had they visited to the city and that is why they are unaware of doing business in the city, and do not know the exact price of goods.

The first dealer, dry and stringy, seemed now to see the pearl for the first time. He took it up, rolled it quickly between thumb and forefinger, and then cast it contemptuously back into the tray.

"Do not include me in the discussion," he said dryly. "I will make no offer at all. I do not want it. This is not a pearl - it is a monstrosity." His thin lips curled.

Now the second dealer, a little man with a shy soft voice, took up the pearl, and he examined it carefully. He took a glass from his pocket and inspected it under magnification. Then he laughed softly."Better pearls are made of paste," he said. "I know these things. This is soft and chalky, it will lose its color and die in a few months. Look-" He offered the glass to Kino, showed him how to use it, and Kino, who had never seen a pearl's surface magnified, was shocked at the strange-looking surface.

The third dealer took the pearl from Kino's hands. "One of my clients likes such things," he said. "I will offer five hundred pesos, and perhaps I can sell it to my client for six hundred."

Kino reached quickly and snatched the pearl from his hand. He wrapped it in the deerskin and thrust it inside his shirt.(Chapter 4 p.50-51)

Analysis: The above passage reveals social and academic subalternity of Kino. The pearl buyers consider the brush house man inferior and illiterate.

In his house Kino squatted on his sleeping mat, brooding. He had buried his pearl under a stone of the fire hole in his house, and he stared at the woven tules of his sleeping-mat until the crossed design danced in his head. He had lost one world and had not gained another. And Kino was afraid.

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Never in his life had he been far from home. He was afraid of strangers and of strange places. He was terrified of that monster of strangeness they called the capital.(Chapter 4 p.52)

Analysis: The sleeping condition of Kino displays the Kino's social and psychological subalternity. For the first time he had visited too far from his brush houses and is afraid of stranger people and place.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Overview of the chapter

This chapter covers the findings of the research study upon the perusal of the text of the novel. It also provides conclusions in the light of the theoretical frame work, the subaltern theory of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. It also provides insight and clues to the future researchers to undertake further research work on the selected novel from fresh perspectives.

Findings

The hermeneutics (close perusal) of the text of the selected novel shows that there are two distinct classes showed in the story of the novel i.e. bourgeois and proletariat. The story of the novel depicts that the doctor, the pearl dealers and the person who hires the trackers belong to the bourgeois class as they complete dominance over the other class. They are literate. They are economically stable. They and their ancestors have colonized the other class for centuries. They first threatened them, abused them and even used guns to silence them into submission. They have control over the pearl business. They buy the pearls from them cheaply and sell them in the city. On the other hand the people of the brush houses are proletariat. Kino, Juana Juan Tomas and Apollonia belong to the proletariat class. They represent the working class. They are illiterate. They are economically poor. They live in shabby and weak houses. They have been colonized by the people of the doctor. They have been deprived from the basic human rights.

Conclusions

In the light of the theory of subalternity presented by a Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci, it is concluded that the novel under study depicts the elements of subalternity. There are two distinct classes bourgeois and proletariat and the hegemony lies in the hands of bourgeois class. The proletariat class had been made subaltern through social segregation as the proletariat have been confined to the brush houses and the bourgeoisie are having luxuries in the stone and plaster houses. The proletariat is kept subaltern academically. As far as business is concerned, the bourgeoisie are robbing the proletariat by buying the pearls through market mafia. As far as discourse is concerned the proletariat class is considered as animals. In short, as per Gramscian theory of subalternity, the proletariat have been kept subaltern by the bourgeois in all walks of life i.e. hegemony is in the hands of the bourgeois class.

Suggestions

This novel has been explored from various aspects and the current study is an addition to it, but this novel can be explored from other angles as well.

The Freudian theory of personality can also be applied for the classification of characters of Id, Ego and Super-ego. It can also be explored for the element of feminism as female characters are mostly

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silent and out of the power structure. The text of the novel can also be explored for the phrases which shows the element of chemicality.

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