

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON BETWEEN STEINBECK AND ARGUETA.

3. INTRODUCTION.

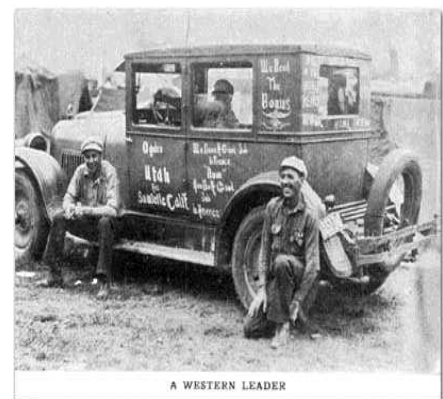
This chapter will discuss the way John Steinbeck has influenced Manlio Argueta, Iberoamerican writer, one of the greatest Salvadorean writers who has been translated into at least eight foreign languages.

The readers can find that some subjects they both used in their stories, are in some cases alike, for example the determination for getting a better lifestyle, the oppression that people suffered, and others. They also used the daily spoken speech, this means that both novels are written with a simple and common language. The language that people in rural places spoke.

3.1 THE GRAPES OF WRATH.

3.1.1 SUMMARY.

In the 1930's, very little rain fell in the central states of the United States. The poor soil broke up and turned to dust. Then the strong winds blew away the dust and the crops disappeared. The families were forced to leave their farms, in order to find work as fruit pickers in California.



A WESTERN LEADER

But the farmers in that state could not pay the people who had come to pick the fruit.



Tom Joad, a young man, had been in jail for four years, because he killed a man who tried to kill him first. He was condemned to seven years in prison but he was set him free on parole for his good behavior. Now he was going to his family's house.

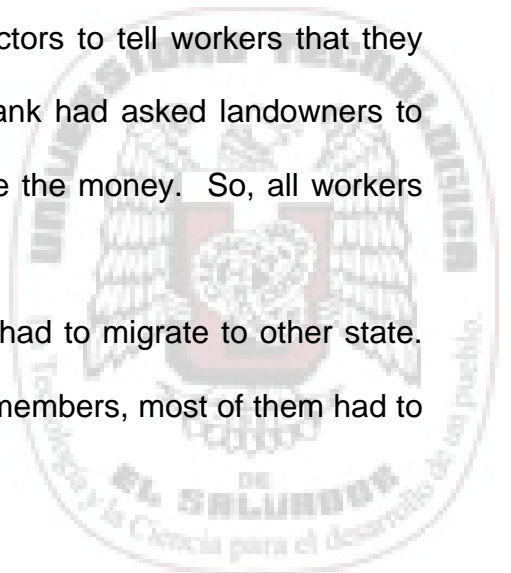
When Tom arrived home, his parents were not able to recognize him at first, but after they did, they were happy to see him. They asked Tom if he had escaped from jail. He explained to them that he was under parole, and that everything was fine. He told them that all his papers were in order.



There was a big drought in that state, then dust came to destroy the corn plantations. It was so thick that farmers had to use handkerchiefs to cover their faces. After this situation, they lost their crops and as a consequence, the

bank was afraid to give more loans and the landowners in the area made them go away. Landowners sent their fore men in tractors to tell workers that they had to leave. The foremen explained that the bank had asked landowners to pay their debts and that their bosses did not have the money. So, all workers had no choice, they had to leave the area.

The Joad family was one of several families that had to migrate to other state. Those families did not have food for feeding their members, most of them had to



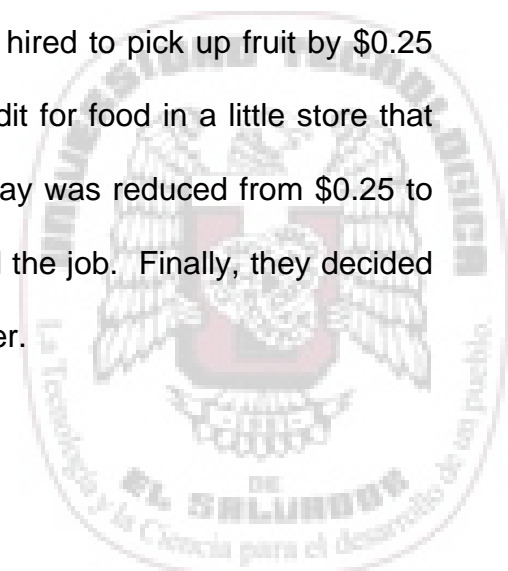
starve. They decided to go to California and Casy went with them. The family loaded an old truck with their things and started to look for a better place where they could work and live in better or at least acceptable conditions.

They found a place which was supposed to have jobs for almost everybody, but that was not true. The employers had written a lot of handbills in order to get people to pick peaches. But they just planned to take advantages over the needs of



poor people. In this way, employers could have many workers with a very slow salary. The place was awful, they had to built tents for living and for avoiding the rain, the wind and so forth. It was a hard job, because they were also treated badly.

They left the previous job, and arrived at a nice place where they found work, house and the main things for living. They were hired to pick up fruit by \$0.25 per box, then they would receive a note with credit for food in a little store that was in the same place. After many days, their pay was reduced from \$0.25 to \$0.12. They did not agree but they really needed the job. Finally, they decided to leave that place and continue looking for another.

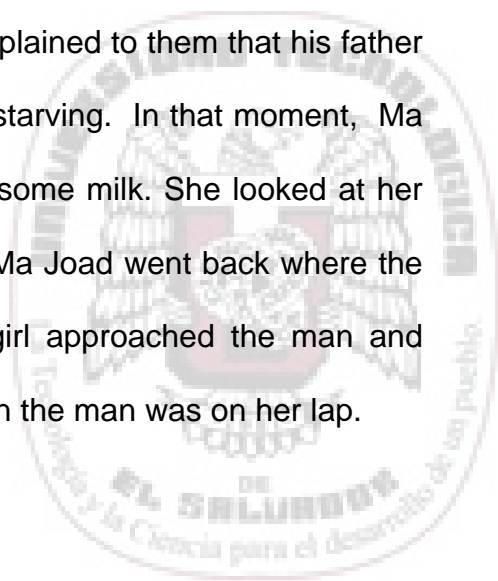




Tom got involved in a fight in which a man killed Casy. Tom fought with the assassin and at the end Tom killed him. Tom went back to his tent and his mother asked about what had happened. He explained to her the

situation, so they decided that Tom should hide, even though Tom was not guilty. Then all the family left the place.

They found some railway cars, and they made one of them their home. There, they were hired by a man for picking cotton. But the time for Rosasharm's delivery had come. Sadly, the unborn baby was dead. Ma Joad could not do anything for helping the baby. During the next days, a storm started, making the stream increase its level. The water was getting in the railway cars, all men tried to stop the stream but it was almost impossible. Then Ma Joad took Rosasharm to a dry place, they found a barn and stayed there for a while. Inside the barn, there was a child with his dying father, the child explained to them that his father had given him all the food and now the man was starving. In that moment, Ma Joad understood that what the man needed was some milk. She looked at her daughter and Rosasharm accepted to help him. Ma Joad went back where the rest of the family was, near the stream. The girl approached the man and started feeding him with her milk. She smiled when the man was on her lap.

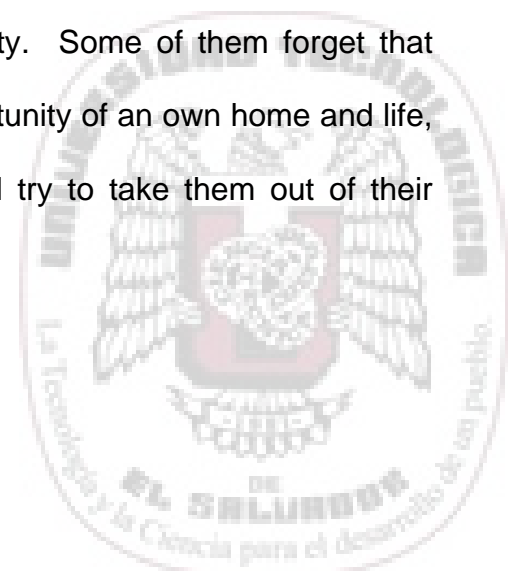


3.1.2 ANALYSIS

In “The Grapes of Wrath”, John Steinbeck depicts the lives of common people fighting against social and economic desperation to preserve their lives. When the Joads, a farmer family, lose their farm and soil in Oklahoma, they join thousands of others, that like them, have lost their homes too, traveling through the concrete highways towards California and the dream of a piece of land to call their own and where they could work for themselves. Each night on the road, they and their fellow migrants recreate society: leaders are chosen, unspoken codes of privacy and generosity evolve, and lust, violence, and murderous rage erupt.

A portrait of the bitter conflict between the powerful and the powerless, of one man's fierce reaction to injustice, and of a woman's quiet, stoical strength, The Grapes of Wrath is a landmark of American literature, one that captures the horrors of the Great Depression as it probes into the very nature of equality and justice in America.

“The Grapes of Wrath”, also shows how people become selfish and angry in order to protect what they consider their property. Some of them forget that those poor people looking for a job and the opportunity of an own home and life, are their fellows. So, they lose the reason and try to take them out of their county.



3.2 ONE DAY OF LIFE.

3.2.1 SUMMARY.

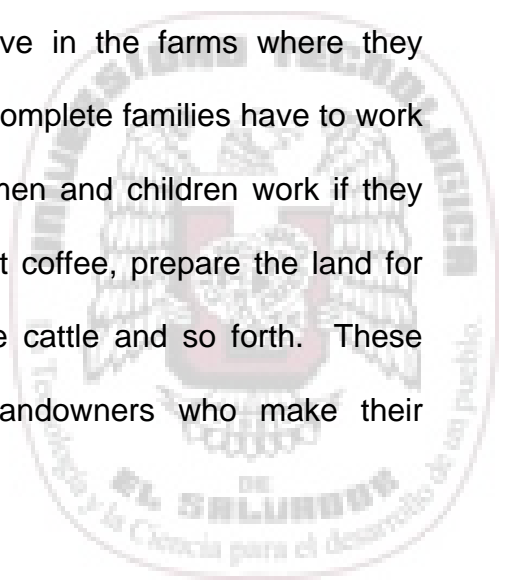
“One Day of Life” is based on true facts about the abusive and oppressive government in El Salvador. The military’s violent methods of enforcing the “democratic way of life” which involves the murders and tortures of innocent human beings who are struggling to survive and at the same time fighting for their human rights are depicted in his story.

“One Day of Life” is a novel whose main character is a woman who tells her own story which involves her family, friends, neighborhood and also life itself. The place is somewhere in Chalatenango.

During her life, this woman and her family had to live hard and terrible moments that made her stronger in her beliefs. The way she has to deal with situations such as, the worry of her husband, the sadness of having lost her son Justino, and the difficult life her little sons had to live is courageous.



At the beginning, the novel deals with the kind of treatment workers receive in the farms where they work. It describes how complete families have to work in order to survive. Women and children work if they want to eat. They collect coffee, prepare the land for sowing, take care of the cattle and so forth. These farms belong to rich landowners who make their

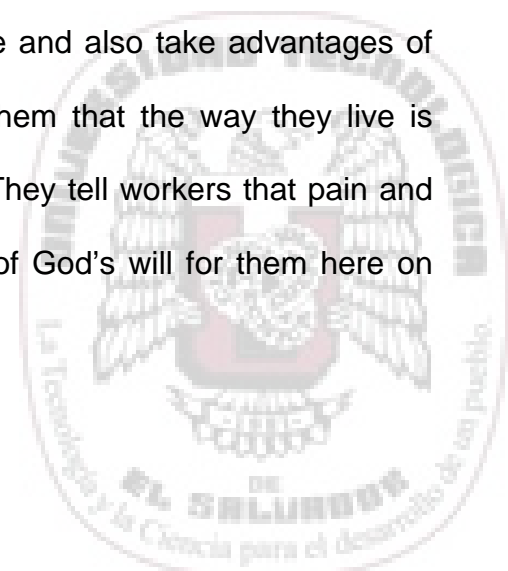


people work hard and constantly for a very low wage. Landowners are supposed to give workers food and fair working conditions but often they find excuses for not giving them food or not paying their wages. Instead, foremen are sent to tell workers that there was no time for preparing the food, or that they did not have enough money for paying. The story depicts how landowners take advantage of the willingness and innocence of the poor people, because all the people who worked in those farms had not attended schools and they were poor in every sense of the word.

The story narrates, that most of the land belongs to a single man. Workers are aware that as far as their eyes could see, it belonged to the landlord, even the air and the sky that was around or up of the land belonged to him.



The church plays an important role. Even though at the beginning, the priests only brainwash people and also take advantages of them by telling them that the way they live is God's decision. They tell workers that pain and suffering is part of God's will for them here on



earth. Priests teach them that poverty is something they just have to accept, and to live with it happily. Priests make sure that workers do not become aware of their neglected situation.

When new and young priests came to the community, they bring new ideas and thoughts that are conveyed to the workers. Priests begin to talk about rights, equality and so forth. This is the beginning of the worker's awareness of their living conditions, or as stated in Salvadorean culture they begin to open their eyes. Of course, this situation brings trouble too, because the landlords become uncomfortable about the workers' demands, which landowners knew they were fair.

Then, landlords are helped by the military authority that was the National Guard. They are paid by the rich in order to keep the stability in their farms and lands. But the authority becomes cruel and the guards had no mercy even with the innocents. The National Guard protects the landlords' belongings without realizing if they are right or wrong. The authority is also influenced and even brainwashed by other people.

People protest against the bad treatment, injustice and cruelty of the landlords. They organize a non-violent demonstration at the bank in order to demand lower prices for fertilizer and seeds. This demonstration makes

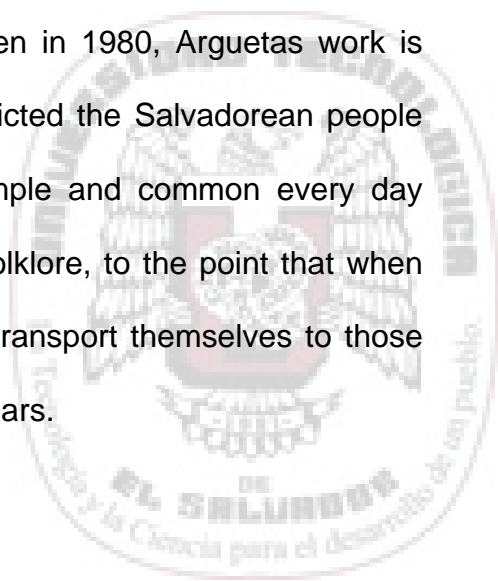


authority acts against workers. Some of the workers are killed during that demonstration, and those who support the activity are taken out of their homes, and most of the time killed in front of their relatives in the middle of the night.

3.2.2 ANALYSIS.

“One Day of Life” is a serious study of the Civil War generated by ideological struggles of two different groups that tried to impose their decisions and to influence the working class especially. In this political struggle, the author tried to show the military confrontation with civilians, and the cruelty in their behavior. In this context, Manlio Argueta, a well known Salvadorean writer, took upon himself the task of viewing the Salvadorian civil war from the eyes of those who lived it. The author portrays pain, suffering and hope as well, of those ones who never gave up in their desire of having a better life. In One Day of Life, Argueta attempts to place the cold war in real terms, in a way that is chillingly real and shocking.

Argueta's story takes place in a reality which is lived by the working class. Argueta's work is crucial to understand the conflict of El Salvador, which was prominent in the media during the 1980s. Written in 1980, Argueta's work is fictional, but the details of the conditions that afflicted the Salvadorean people for 12 years are real facts. Described in a simple and common every day language, the author gave his novel a taste of folklore, to the point that when readers are concentrated in the novel, they can transport themselves to those events, and also feel what they felt during those years.

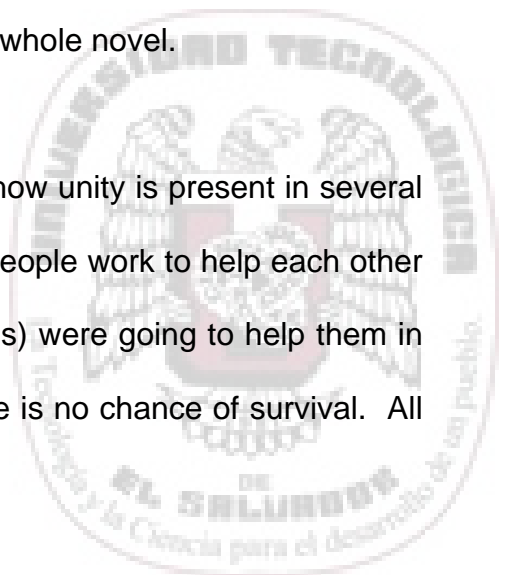


For the outsider, the Salvadorean civil war was a vicious conflict which resulted in the deaths of a big quantity of civilians. It is amazing and unbelievable the way how many people were killed by both groups “the military and the guerrilla”. Statistics show that 750,000 to over a million Salvadoreans left the country and migrated to the United States, and other countries looking for a better condition and the opportunity for helping their families. In this way, they tried to escape from the uncertainty.

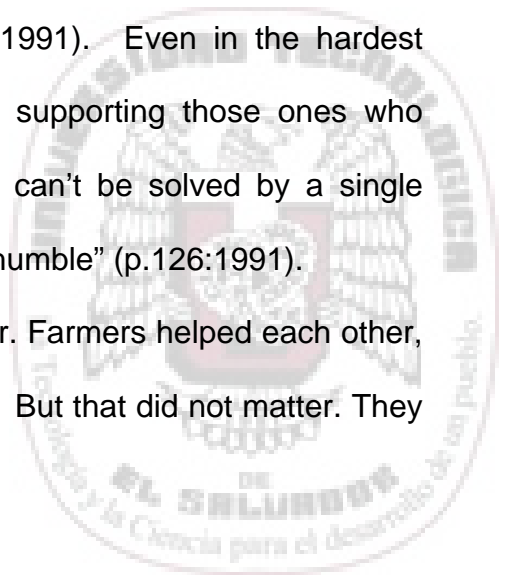
3.3 COMMON POINTS IN THE NOVELS.

MAIN CHARACTERS – WOMEN IN BOTH NOVELS : In the Grapes of Wrath the character who has the most participative and relevant role is a woman named Ma Joad, who is the person in charge of caring for each member of the Joad family. In one day of Life, the main character is a woman named Lupe and also she is the one who tells the events during the whole novel.

UNITY: In “One Day of Life”, the reader can see how unity is present in several events of the novel. Together, as a community, people work to help each other because there was no way their masters (landlords) were going to help them in any way. They have to stick together or else there is no chance of survival. All



of them acted as one person, in groups, fighting for the same cause, fighting in one feeling, supporting each other in any circumstance as little ants do. The pain one felt, was felt by everyone. One's suffering was the suffering of everybody, one's hope was the hope of everybody, one's life was the life of everybody: "Imagine, ever since what happened to Father Luna they've stayed away; there's the chapel, completely dirty, no one will even come close to it. Especially since they know that he was our neighbor and we're united" (p.33:1991). People felt sad and angry about what the authority had done to the young priest of the church they visited. "Lately José has learned many things – you see, the poor man is interested in the problems of the community. I say it that way, because with all the work he has to do, he is still interested in others. 'One has to help people so that they themselves will recognize their own problems,' he tells me." (p.57:1991). The worry and insistent desire for helping others is well marked in this novel. "I sympathize with those who get involved in things to secure our rights. And sometimes I participate a little" (p.101:1991). "Everything people say is a way of being with Lupe. Today for you, tomorrow for me. We make her mourning our own". (p.108:1991). Even in the hardest conditions, they were together as a real family, supporting those ones who needed to be supported: "That's why problems can't be solved by a single person, but only by all of us working together, the humble" (p.126:1991). In "The Grapes of Wrath", unity is sensed in the air. Farmers helped each other, even though they did not have so much for giving. But that did not matter. They

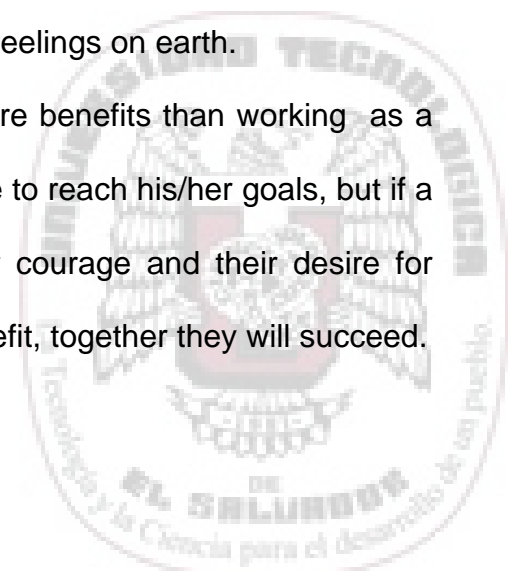


shared with others what they had. Farmers supported when they could do, as the reader can see in the next quotation: “Casy – he’s the preacher – wants to go west with us. He’s a nice fella. Pa said, I wonder if all of us can ride in the truck, and the preacher too. And can we feed another mouth? Ma said clearly. I say we will. The Joad family doesn’t refuse food or a ride to anybody that asks.” (p.25:1992).

Fellows understood that helping others was the best way to help themselves. If a person does the good to her/his fellow, they can receive the same from that person who was helped before. They applied the proverb that says: Do good and do not care who will receive it. This example can be understood in the following quotation: “The older man said to Tom, had your breakfast? Well, sit down with us then. We’ve got plenty, thank God”. (p.71:1992).

Argueta and Steinbeck tried to show one important thing. If all the people behave like the characters in both novels, life would be better for everybody. Human beings should be less selfish, think in others, not only in themselves. If human beings had this kind of thought, the world would be a beautiful place where to live. Helping others it is one of the best feelings on earth.

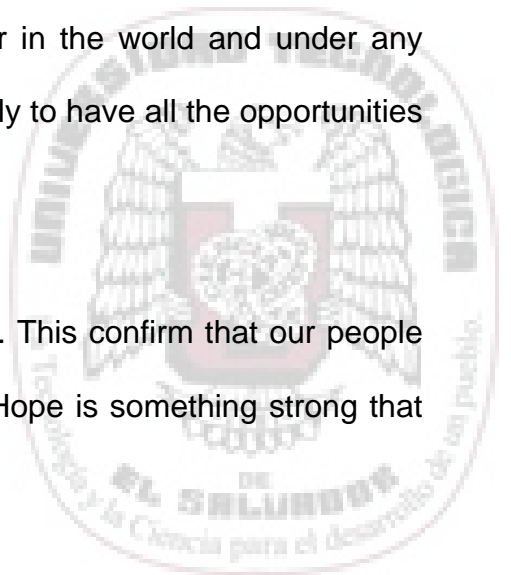
Working together as a family, people can get more benefits than working as a single person. One person maybe cannot be able to reach his/her goals, but if a group of people get united their strength, their courage and their desire for changing evil into right and work for a mutual benefit, together they will succeed.



HOPE AND FAITH: In the Grapes of Wrath, hope and faith are also present. Even though things were going badly, the Joad family thought the contrary: “You glad to be going, Pa? Al asked. Well, yeah. It’s been hard here. It’ll be diferente out there. Plenty of work, little white houses to live in, oranges growing everywhere” (p.27:1992). The family stayed together, trying to go ahead. Thinking that it would have a better place with better opportunities for them: “It’s a lot of trouble getting to California, but it’ll be worth it” (p.34:1992). They never gave up, all the time they were fighting against situations. They always thought that future could bring them better things. They were really a fighting family.

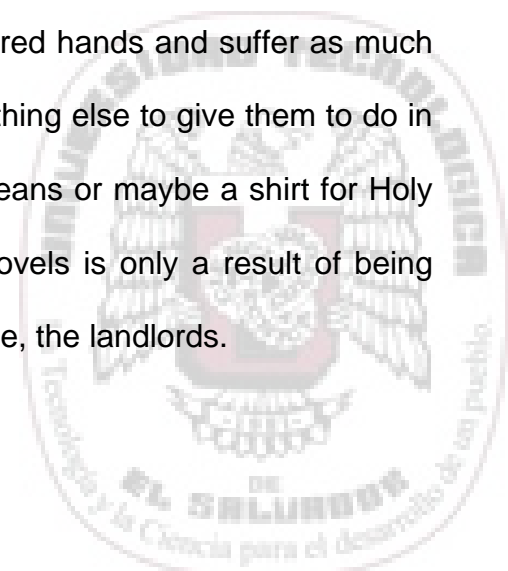
“The Grapes of Wrath” deals with feelings and wishes about having a better future for the children. “Ma, Rose of Sharon said, when we get there, me and Connie have got it all planned. Connie’s going to get a job in a store, or so he can have his own store. Nice clean work and a good future. The baby’ll have all new stuff when it’s born.” (p.37:1992). What the girl wanted was for her husband to study and get a job for their well being and their future baby. She thought that they could improve their lifestyle, as any mother in the world and under any circumstances would desire. She wanted her family to have all the opportunities she never had.

Hope also pervades throughout “One Day of Life”. This confirm that our people believed firmly and still believe in God’s mercy. Hope is something strong that



can not be taken away no matter what the circumstances are. Hope was a factor that kept people's strength to survive. The hope of having a better life: "I would like all our children to learn to read so that they won't have to live as hired hands and suffer as much as we have" (p.12:1991). Here people show their desire for having a better life with their families, in order to take away pain and suffering from them. " Because what can you do but endure and endure and relieve that at least someday you'll have some tranquillity that you're going to live in peace and your children will have enough to eat" (p.46:1991). The security of things are going to change, even though the next generations are going to be the ones who will live a different life. "From these people there's no relief; but one of these days things are going to change. And José says that day is not far away" (p.101:1991). The great patient for waiting for those desired changes and stops of abuses.

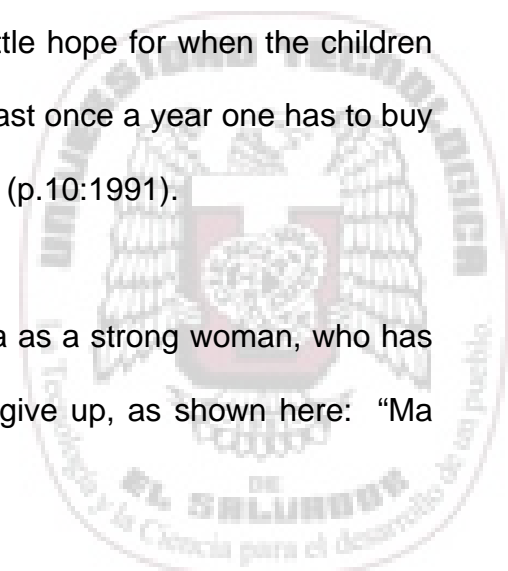
The characters in "One Day of Life" also want a better life for their children, better than the one they had. Because they had a hard life working a lot and getting little money for that: "Jose has told me. I would like all our children to learn to read so that they won't have to live as hired hands and suffer as much as we have. Especially, since we don't have anything else to give them to do in the off-season, when we eat hardly enough for beans or maybe a shirt for Holy Week." (p.12:1991). What happened in both novels is only a result of being under injustice and oppression from the rich people, the landlords.



WOMEN'S ROLE: In “The Grapes of Wrath”, women’s role is well defined as the family basis. Women are in charge of each member in the family. Ma Joad was always taking care of her family. She was a firm spirited woman, who tried to keep the entire family together. She also gave her family comfort as well as courage to go ahead in any difficult situation, as these lines show: “Ma was the strong centre of the family and she knew it. She protected her family from all the bad things that were happening to them. If Ma lost her strength, the family would break up” (p.21:1992), and “Ma looked up at the girl’s sad face. ‘You’ve been crying,’ she said. ‘Come here now and peel potatoes. You’ve got to stop feeling sorry for yourself” (p.64:1992).

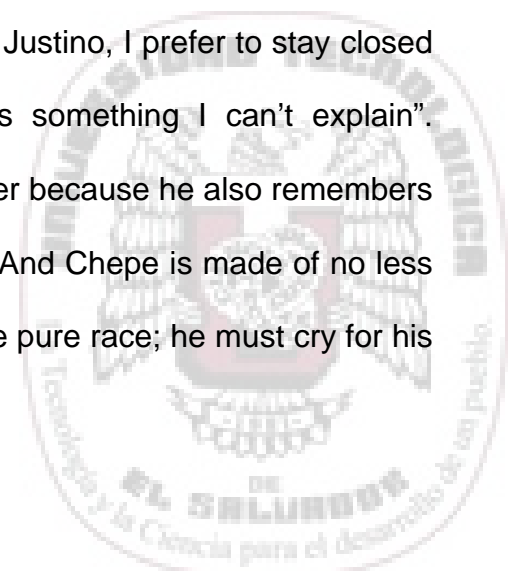
“One Day of Life”, also shows the importance of women’s role as the family basis. Lupe took care of her whole family. She had to keep them together. The author shows that a woman was in charge of getting food for the children when the man was not at home, or when the man could not afford something for the children. Manlio Argueta makes his female character raise pigs as a way of helping her man and as a source for getting some money: “These pigs sure are enough to drive you crazy, but they’re our only little hope for when the children ask for something that we can’t deny them – at least once a year one has to buy them a new shirt or pants for a special occasion”. (p.10:1991).

INTERNAL SUFFERING: Steinbeck portrays Ma as a strong woman, who has to inspire courage on the others. She could not give up, as shown here: “Ma



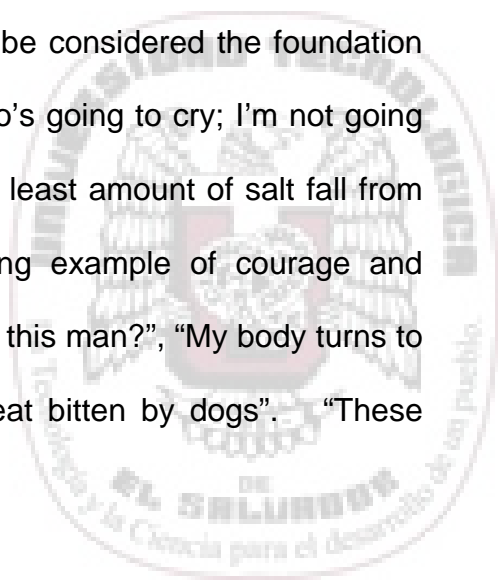
climbed down from the truck. Her eyes were hard. 'Look, mister,' she said. 'we've got a sick old lady. We've got to get her to a doctor. She was fighting back tears. (p.50:1992). "She's all right,' Ma said. 'Drive on. We've got to get across.' (p.51:1992). "Grandma's dead'. "Ma said. 'I told Grandma we couldn't help her. We couldn't stop in the desert. We had to think of the young ones and Rosasharn's baby!'. (p.52:1992). The reader can probably imagine the kind of pain Ma Joad had to undertake silently, because she did not want to disturb the whole family. She swallowed her tears and her sadness. "Tom led Ma to the entrance of the cave. 'Goodbye,' she said and she walked quietly away. Her eyes were wet and burning, but she did not cry." (p.111:1992). In these quotations the reader probably realizes a mother's pain when one of her children has to go away and hide from other people. That was another hard experience she had to live.

In "One Day of Life" the female character suffers in silence because she does not show other her weakness. She does not want to worry the other members of her family, that is why she prefers to keep the pain in the deepest part of her heart and mind: "After what happened to my son Justino, I prefer to stay closed up inside myself. It's not that I get sad. It's something I can't explain". (p.9:1991). The male character suffers in his inner because he also remembers the way the authority killed him with no mercy: "And Chepe is made of no less sterner stuff. It happens that he is strong, is of the pure race; he must cry for his son inside his soul." (p.109:1991).



COURAGE AND DETERMINATION: In “The Grapes of Wrath”, these two characteristics are well marked during the novel, the most representative character with these characteristics is Ma Joan. She confronted whoever tried to damage the family. She was the protective shield. The next quotation is an example of courage: “Ma said, ‘What do you want, mister?’ ‘Where’s your men? Where’re you from?’ ‘Near Sallisaw, Oklahoma. We’re crossing the desert tonight, mister.’ ‘Well, you’d better. We don’t want none of you Okies settling down here.’ Ma’s face darkened with anger. She picked up an iron pan. ‘Okies?’ she said softly. ‘Okies? You’ve got a gun, mister, but I’m not scared of you”. (p.46:1992). An example of determination is expressed in: “Ma walked to the car, picked up the jack-handle and held it in her hand. Her mouth was set hard. ‘The only way to get me to go, is to beat me. And if you do, I’ll hit you with this handle. Come on,’ said Ma. ‘Just try it”. (p.38:1992).

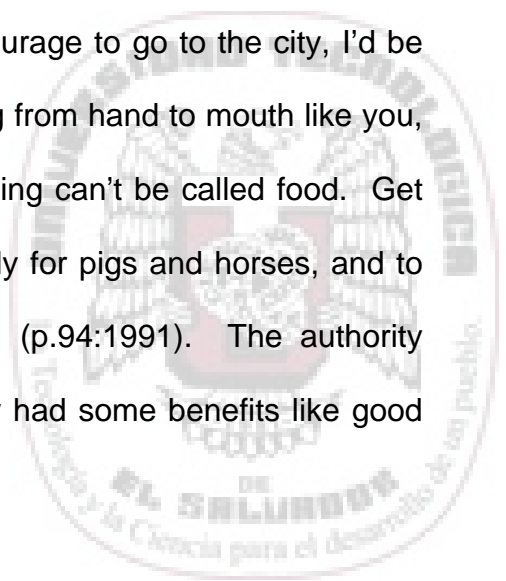
“One Day of Life”, not also reflects injustice and fight for human rights, it also shows the strength of the woman’s heart, Lupe’s heart mainly. This female character has a strong and brave heart, she can be considered the foundation for the Guardado family: “But I’m not the one who’s going to cry; I’m not going to give our enemies the satisfaction of seeing the least amount of salt fall from my eyes”. But the most important and rebelling example of courage and determination is the next quotation: “Do you know this man?”, “My body turns to ice as I see you transformed into a piece of meat bitten by dogs”. “These



vampires, sons of a hundred thousand whores, killers of the dirtiest stripe”.
“Then I said no. It had to be a no without any quavering of my voice, without the least trace of hesitation. And at that moment your good eye opened, the one they had left you”. (pp.191-192:1991)

SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION: “The Grapes of Wrath” “And the people there. They look at you. And they hate you because they’re scared. They’re scared someone’s going to take that land. You’ve never been called ‘Okie’ yet. Tom said, ‘Okie’? What’s that?. Well, Okie used to mean you were from Oklahoma. Now it means you’re no good, you’re dirt. There’s three hundred of our people there, living like dogs.” (p.45:1992). “Well, you’d better. We don’t want none of you Okies settling down here”. (p.46:1992). “Well, them Okies ain’t got no sense. They ain’t human. A human being couldn’t live so dirty and miserable.” (p.49:1992).

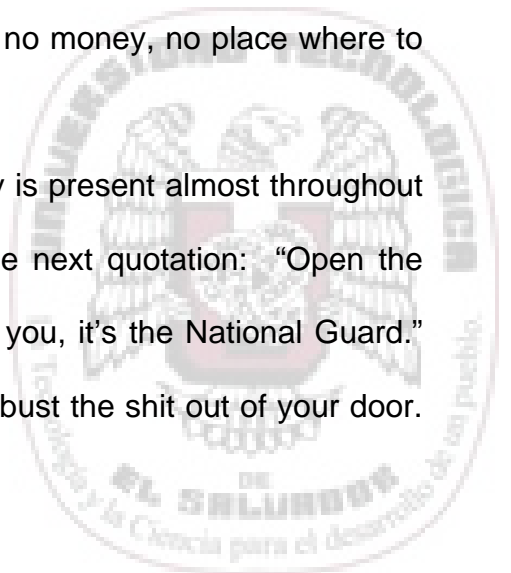
“One Day of Life” contains a lot of discrimination from the National Guard through the farmworkers, even though some authorities came from that kind of people: “Look at me. Well, if I hadn’t had the courage to go to the city, I’d be like you, no offense intended, brother. I’d be living from hand to mouth like you, eating shit; by the way, that stuff you’ve been eating can’t be called food. Get this, in the United States, for example, corn is only for pigs and horses, and to think that here we settle for tortillas and salt.” (p.94:1991). The authority believe they were better than poors because they had some benefits like good



food, a salary, education, and so forth. The education the guardmen received separated them from their own people. Others made their minds changed completely, to the point they did not feel mercy for the farmworkers. So they did not consider farmworkers as equals.

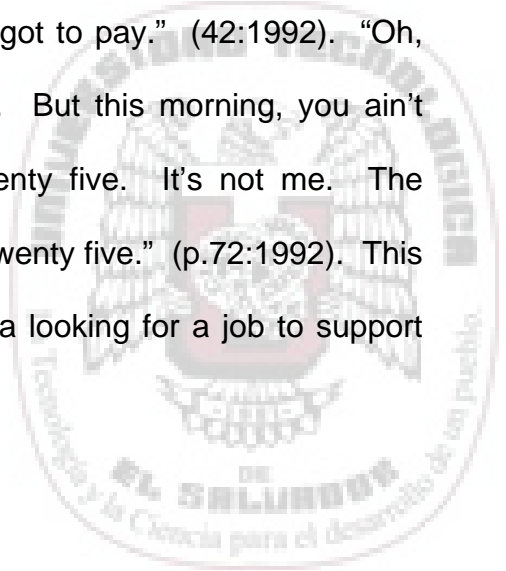
ABUSE OF POWER AND AUTHORITY: “The Grapes of Wrath” shows how farmworkers were treated badly by landowners and their foremen. The first trait of this is found at the beginning of the novel, when landowners sent the tractors to put people out, drivers did not have mercy of the poor farmworkers: “I’ve got orders. If you don’t move out, maybe I’ll push in your home a little. They might pay me extra for that”. (p.16:1992). “This contractor can use all of you. Tulare County. It might be a good idea to go. This camp’s dirty. We’ve got to clean it out. We might have to do a lot of burning. Might be better if you’re not here when we do that. ‘Now, you’, the deputy said to Floyd, ‘you get in that car.’” (p.62:1992). Deputies were men who helped the cherif, but most of the time, they behaved wrongly and unfairly against the farmworkers. Because deputies knew they did not have anything, no job, no food, no money, no place where to live.

In “One Day of Life”, abuse of power and authority is present almost throughout the story. Such instances can be detected in the next quotation: “Open the door! Or we’re going to bust the shit out of it for you, it’s the National Guard.” “We’re not waiting for you; either open up or we’ll bust the shit out of your door.



We're already running out of patience, they told me". "So you oppose authority? Just wait, because the worst is yet to come, you haven't seen anything." (pp.72-73:1991). The National Guard did not respect human rights of the poor, they not only insulted people, but they also treated them badly, especially those who they considered their enemies.

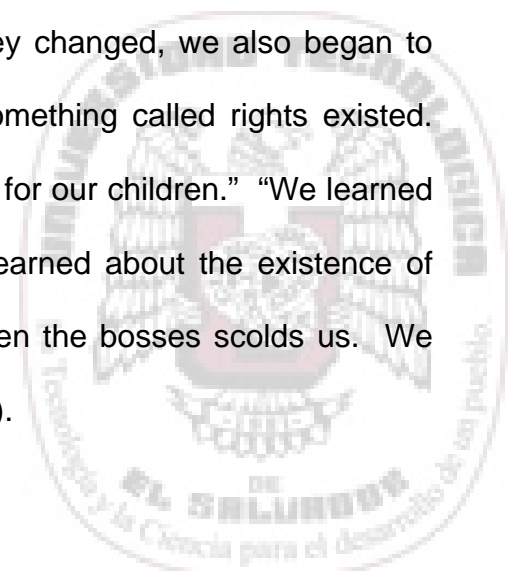
WORKERS' EXPLOITATION: In "The Grapes of Wrath" Steinbeck describes how the landowners exploited the poor people who came from Oklahoma. Californians had a lot of fruit to pick up, but they could not sell it. "They were afraid that the people from Oklahoma – the Okies - would take their land. The Californians gave the Okies so little money for their work that entire families starved." (p.7:1992). Californians realized the poor workers' needs and they began to take advantage on them. "It makes sense to the fella who put out the bills. He sees people with no food. So he tells them: 'I'm paying twenty cents an hour.' Maybe a thousand men find out. Half the men won't do it. But the other five hundred are so hungry, they'll work for biscuits. The more fellas he can get, and the hungrier they are, the less he's got to pay." (42:1992). "Oh, sure! I'll give him work. I'll give anybody work. But this morning, you ain't getting thirty cents an hour – you're getting twenty five. It's not me. The Farmers' Association told me last night the rate's twenty five." (p.72:1992). This happened to many workers who went to California looking for a job to support their family.



“One Day of Life” also deals with this topic, as shown in the following quotation: “We would take even the smallest one, who was only seven years old. “All of us picking while the foreman took down our names. We, the children, weren’t put on the list because that meant you had a right to tortillas and beans, and they weren’t about to feed all of us, only the adults.” (p.133:1991). Landowners hired adults and also children. The difference was that children would not receive food, just adults, but they would work like adults.

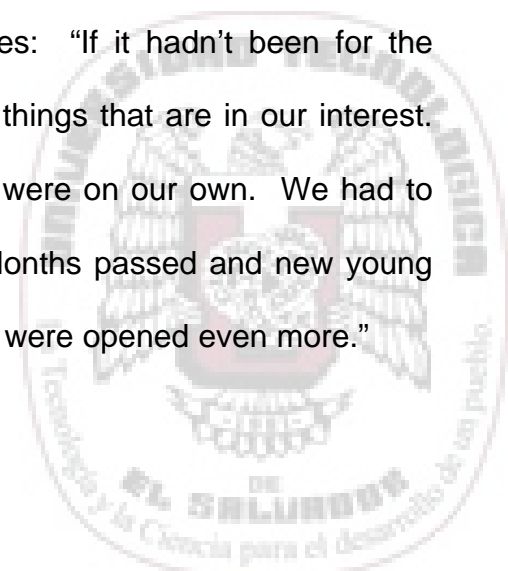
AWARENESS: “The Grapes of Wrath“ shows how people after being deceived, took conciousness about the situation they were forced to live with their families. They understood that this kind of life was not fair for anybody. They started to think seriouly: “Look, Tom’, he said. ‘We came to work here. There was a lot of us. They told us five cents a box, then when we started, they said they was paying two and a half cents. A fella can’t eat for that.” (p.96:1992).

In “One Day of Life” people got tired of being neglected and abused, of being treated unfairly, etc. There was a moment when they began to think carefully about the situation, for example: “And when they changed, we also began to change. It was nicer that way, knowing that something called rights existed. The right to health care, to food and to schooling for our children.” “We learned to look out for ourselves.” “Besides, once we learned about the existence of rights we also learned not to bow our heads when the bosses scolds us. We learned to look them in the face.” (pp.31-32:1991).



In “The Grapes of Wrath” there is a character who made farmworkers think, wake up and look for solutions for such their situation. He encouraged them to face injustice, abuses, misery and other. He was the one who helped them and tried to change wrong things: “Look, Tom’, he said. ‘We came to work here. There were a lot of us. They told us five cents a box, then, when we started, they said they was paying two and a half cents. A fella can’t eat for that.” “So we says we won’t work for two and a half cents a box. So the cops came and drove us off. When they’ve bust this strike, do you think they’ll pay you five?” “Some of us here haven’t eaten for days. You go back and tell the others what’s happened. You’re starving us by working and soon you’ll starving yourselves.” “Look, Tom, said Casy. ‘try to get the folks out on strike. Them peaches are ripe. They’ve got to be picked.” (p.96:1992).

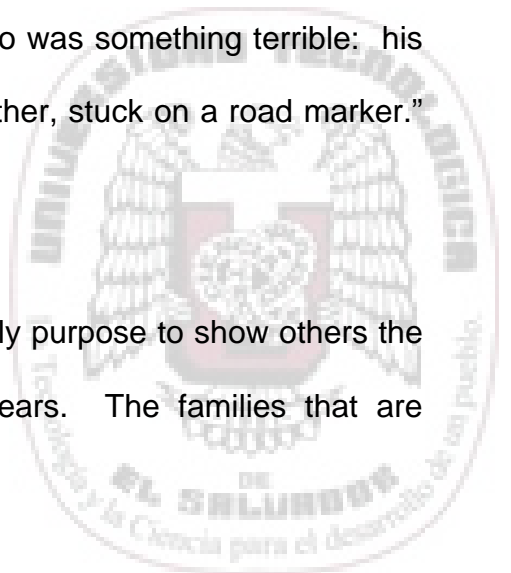
“One Day of Life” discusses people’s change. They stop believing all the lies old priests and landowners told them. But this was possible until priests with a different way of thinking arrived to the Kilometer. They explained that to be good people did not mean to stand unjustices, abuses, misery and others. In that way, peasants began to think by themselves: “If it hadn’t been for the priests, we wouldn’t have found out about those things that are in our interest. They opened our eyes, nothing more. Later we were on our own. We had to rely on our own resources.” (pp.31-32:1991). “Months passed and new young priests came and said the same things. Our eyes were opened even more.”



MURDER OF THE LEADER: “The Grapes Wrath” presents the murder of the person who guided the strike, the leader: “A short, heavy man stepped into the light. He was carrying a new pick-handle. Casy repeated, ‘You don’t know what you’re doing.’ The heavy man swung the pick-handle. It crashed into the side of Casy’s head and he fell. ‘Jesus, I think you’ve killed him!’ said one of the men. The flashlight shone down on Casy’s crushed head.” (p.97:1992) “Last night, I found Casy. He was leading the strike. Then some fellas came for him. They hit him, -killed him.” (p.99:1992). In this way, deputies, landowners and other men thought that they would stop farmworkers from fighting for their rights. Killing the leader, the problem was solved, they thought.

“One Day of Life” also presents the death of the one who led the protest against the situation, but the authorities found out that he was in charge of guiding the people of the Kilometer to the bank, in order to ask for a reduction of prices on the fertilizer and chemical products they needed for planting. That was the reason why the National Guard was chosen to take over the matter: “It was better to deceive her and tell her that Justino was badly wounded; but the truth had already spread, what they had done to Justino was something terrible: his body was found in one place and his head in another, stuck on a road marker.” (p.105:1991).

AUDIENCE: Both novels were written with the only purpose to show others the real situation that farmworkers lived in those years. The families that are

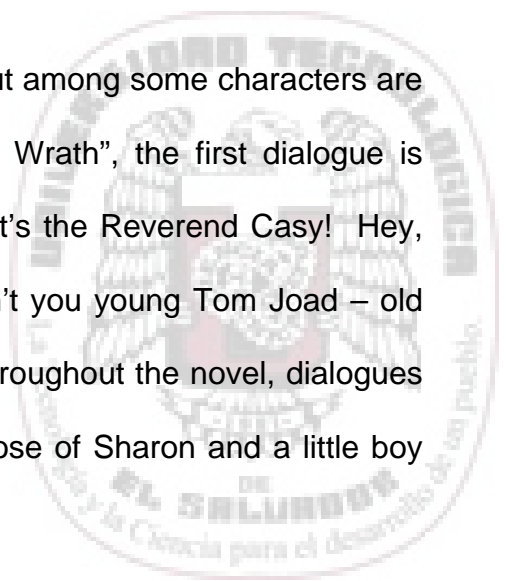


mentioned in the novels were very poor families, who depended on a very low salary to survive. These novels tried to arouse people's consciousness in the civilian population. The writers got involved into the farm workers' situation.

3.4 TECHNIQUES USED IN THE NOVELS.

GENRE: Both novel are historical and they are clasified in realistic fiction with social commentary, because they estate a real problem of a country, again the real facts are present. Both writers based their novels in real facts. This shows they were interested in their people's problems. Manlio Argueta tried to show and communicate others, all the conflicts and sufferings a poor famyly had to face in difficult times as it was the Civil War during the 1980's in El Salvador. Similarly, John Steinbeck did the same. He focused his novel in all the conflicts and sufferings people in Oklahona had to live during the great drought in the 1930's in the United States of America. The reader can find true facts about these two events, so the novel are not completely fiction but historical.

DIALOGUES: In both novels, dialogues carried out among some characters are always present. For example in "The Grapes of Wrath", the first dialogue is between Tom Joad and Reverend Casy: "Why, it's the Reverend Casy! Hey, Casy, how are you?" Tom called out. 'Now aren't you young Tom Joad – old Tom's boy?' Casy called back. (p.13:1992). All throughout the novel, dialogues continuously appear, in the last one, Ma Joad, Rose of Sharon and a little boy



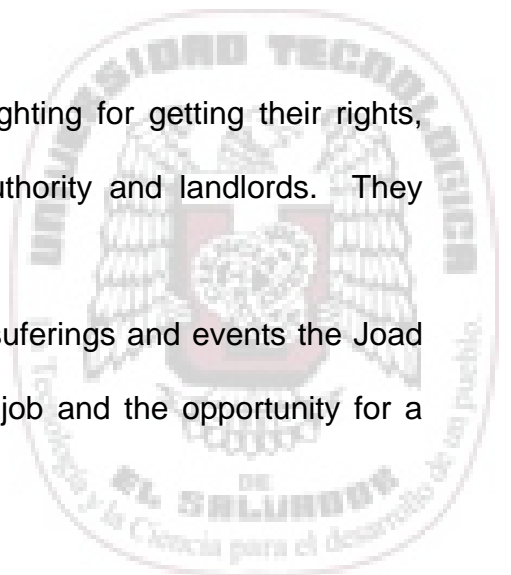
participate: “Suddenly the boy said, ‘My Pa’s dying. He’s starving to death. He’s got to have some milk...’ Hush,’ said Ma. She looked at Rose of Sharon. The two women looked into each other’s eyes. The girl breathed quickly. ‘Yes,’ she said. Ma smiled. ‘I knew you would, I knew.’ (p.127:1992).

In “One Day of Life”, dialogues are also part of the plot. The first dialogue takes place between Doña Rubenia, Lupe’s mother and Don Josè, Lupe’s future husband, in that instance, Josè was asking Doña Rubenia for Lupe, he was explaining to her that he felt alone and Lupe would be a good companion for him. (p.5:1991). The novel ends in a dialogue between Adolfina and Lupe, talking about the poor man the guards had caught and hit wildly. (pp.213-215:1991).

LANGUAGE: Both novels, “The Grapes of Wrath” and “One Day of Life”, were written in a very common language, the same way as people talked in their places, this is called colloquial language. This kind of language is present since the very beginning up to the end of each novel.

CONFLICT: In both novels, the families were fighting for getting their rights, because they got bored to be abuse by the authority and landlords. They wanted to be treated as equals.

“The Grapes of Wrath” deals with the problems, suferings and events the Joad family had to face while they were looking for a job and the opportunity for a

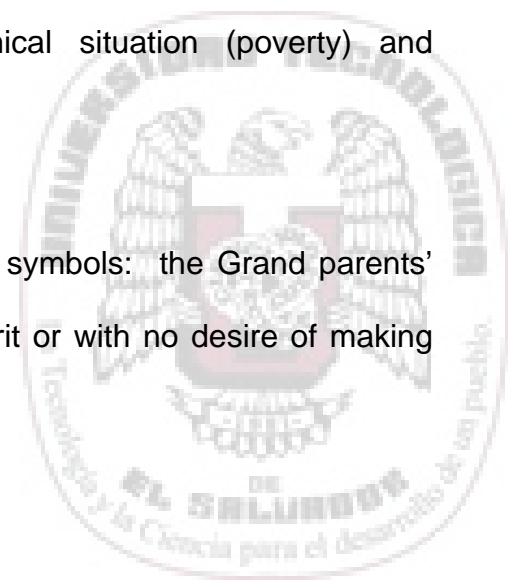


better lifestyle. “One Day of Life” also deals with pain, suffering and sacrifices the Lupe’s family faced during the fight for their rights and a fair life.

IMAGERY: The novels are full of imageries. Writers used a very detailed description of places and events, for example in the Grapes of Wrath, the writer starts his novel with a description a corn field was almost destroyed by natural elements, and how people (farmers) had to use handkerchiefs covering their noses and mouths in order to breathe. In One Day of Life, the main character gives describes how a rural family starts every single day. She describes the stars she looks at through little holes in her hut. She also talks about a bird called Clarinero and the way it sings. Both novels make readers transport themselves to the situations portrayed.

ANTAGONISTS: In the Grapes of Wrath, the researchers found the following antagonists: Nature (sun, wind, dust, steam), economical situation (poverty, authority (landlords, deputies), ignorance. In One Day of Life the antagonist are: Authority (national guard, landlords), economical situation (poverty) and ignorance.

SYMBOLS: “The Grapes of Wrath” includes as symbols: the Grand parents’ death that symbolizes that people with weak spirit or with no desire of making



main changes, will never be able to reach a better life or have the minimum sources for living.

Rosasharm's pregnancy symbolizes that if a little hope is not fed as necessary, it will not grow. Because hope needs people's attention, it needs that people take care of it. Hope needs people who believe and desire having it among them. They must set it as part of their lives.

"One Day of Life" has also its own symbols as: Birds's song means that people with strong fighting spirit will always face problems with a positive attitude. They will never give up to the possibility of finding a solution. The Clarinero, the bird used to illustrate the novel, is a happy and noisy animal that sings at all times.

The morning star appears when dawn starts coming, so night has ended and a new day is almost beginning. It means that when problems are in their critical state, it is because the solution is coming soon.

REALISM: Both novels depict the everyday life and language of ordinary people, farmworkers. They present events as they really are. Writers just retell two true events as the depression in USA and the civil war in El Salvador.

