



**UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE BAJA CALIFORNIA  
FACULTAD DE IDIOMAS ENSENADA  
CAMPUS ENSENADA**



## **TESIS**

**“THE INFLUENCE OF ARTHURIAN LEGENDS ON JOHN  
STEINBECK'S TORTILLA FLAT”**

**PARA CUBRIR LOS REQUISITOS NECESARIOS PARA  
OBTENER EL TITULO DE**

**LICENCIADO EN TRADUCCIÓN**

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**Ensenada, Baja California a 19 de abril de 2024.**



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## VOTOS APROBATORIOS PARA EXAMEN PROFESIONAL

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FACULTAD DE IDIOMAS  
ENSENADA. B.C.

“POR LA REALIZACIÓN PLENA DEL SER”

Ensenada, Baja California a 19 de abril de 2024.

## RESUMEN

Esta tesis examina la novela *Tortilla Flat* (1935) y su paralelismo con la clásica novelade Thomas Malory, *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485). La investigación se presenta en cinco capítulos que exploran diversos aspectos de las novelas, como los personajes, los temas y los relatos que ilustran el paralelismo entre los protagonistas. Asimismo, el estudio analiza a fondo la época contemporánea y el contexto histórico de John Steinbeck, que influyeron en su escritura y su literatura. y los temas que exploró en *Tortilla Flat* (1935) como la Primera Guerra Mundial, la Gran Depresión, la Ley Seca, los autores de La Generación Perdida y su influencia. Además, introduce a los clásicos y míticos personajes de las leyendas artúricas.

La literatura inglesa medieval sigue muy presente en libros, películas e inspiraciones simbólicas en nuestros días. La era medieval fue una época próspera para las narraciones románticas de acontecimientos históricos y los relatos heroicos de victorias en el campo de batalla. En conjunto, esta tesis pretende dar a entender interpretación desde el punto de vista de Steinbeck como de los matices sociales de la Generación Perdida que Steinbeck alcanzó con su movimiento literario. El grupo estaba formado por expatriados por decisión personal, autores como Ernest Hemmingway, Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Henry Miller, John Dos Passos y William Faulkner. Estos eran los máximos exponentes de los escritores y novelistas estadounidenses que vivían norteamericanos que vivieron principalmente en Francia y de los novelistas que participaron en la Primera Guerra Mundial, destacando la riqueza y profundidad del estilo de escritura de Steinbeck y resaltando el perdurable legado de la cultura hispana. En él se muestra la importancia de la literatura inglesa y cómo los acontecimientos históricos pueden cambiar la percepción de

los movimientos literarios, proporcionando consuelo e inspiración en tiempos difíciles. Estos escritores captaron el espíritu de la Generación Perdida, reflejando la desilusión y la incertidumbre de su tiempo que remodelaron un nuevo movimiento literario. Sus obras siguen siendo estudiadas y celebradas como contribuciones esenciales a la literatura y la cultura estadounidenses, dejando un legado duradero que se extiende mucho más allá de su época

Al representar la cultura hispana como la nobleza de los caballeros de las leyendas artúricas, Steinbeck subraya la importancia y el valor de todos los orígenes raciales y étnicos, desafiando la noción de superioridad cultural estadounidense. Esta representación sirve como recordatorio de las importantes contribuciones y el valor inherente de los hispanoamericanos en la configuración de la sociedad estadounidense.

Finalmente, reconocer los retos a los que se enfrenta la comunidad hispana y celebrar sus contribuciones es esencial para crear una sociedad más inclusiva y equitativa. Al reconocer la riqueza de la cultura hispana y desafiar los estereotipos, podemos trabajar para construir una sociedad que valore la diversidad y promueva la igualdad de oportunidades para todos, *Tortilla Flat* (1935) es un testimonio de la habilidad de Steinbeck para combinar el realismo social con el simbolismo mítico, ofreciendo a los lectores una exploración atemporal de la naturaleza humana y los valores sociales. A través de su rico tapiz de personajes, temas y contextos históricos, la novela sigue cautivando al público e inspirando una reflexión crítica sobre las complejidades de la vida.

**Palabras Clave:** Generación perdida, literatura norteamericana, Leyendas Artúricas, paralelismo.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the novel *Tortilla Flat* (1935) and its similarities to Thomas Malory's classic novel, *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485). The research is presented in five chapters that explore various aspects of the novels, including characters, themes, and tales that illustrate parallelism between the main characters. Also, the study thoroughly analyzes John Steinbeck's contemporary age and historical context, influencing his writing and literature. and the themes he explored in *Tortilla Flat* (1935) as World War I, the Great Depression, Prohibition, authors of The Lost Generation and their influence on the novel.

Furthermore, introduces an abreast into Arthurian legends' classics and mythical characters. English medieval literature is still very present in so many books, movies, and symbolic inspirations in our days. The medieval era was a prosperous time for romanticized retellings of historical events and heroic tales of victory on the battlefield.

Overall, this thesis pretends to throw some light on the interpretation of both Steinbeck's work and Lost Generation's social nuances. Steinbeck to reach his literature movement. The group was composed of expatriates by personal decision, authors like Ernest Hemmingway, Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Henry Miller, John Dos Passos and William Faulkner. These were the most important exponents of American writers living mainly in France and novelists participating in World War 1, emphasizing the richness and depth of Steinbeck's writing style and highlighting the enduring legacy of Hispanic culture.

It provides the importance of English literature and how historical events can change literature movements, providing comfort and inspiration during difficult times.

these writers captured the spirit of the Lost Generation, reflecting the disillusionment and uncertainty of their time while reshaping literary discourse. Their works continue to be studied and celebrated as essential contributions to American literature and culture, leaving a lasting legacy that extends far beyond their era.

By representing Hispanic culture as the nobility of the knights of the Arthurian legends, Steinbeck emphasizes the importance and value of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, challenging the notion of American cultural superiority. This representation serves as a reminder of the significant contributions and inherent worth of Hispanic Americans in shaping American society. In conclusion, acknowledging the challenges faced by the Hispanic community and celebrating their contributions is essential for creating a more inclusive and equitable society. By recognizing the richness of Hispanic culture and challenging stereotypes, we can work towards building a society that values diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all.

*Tortilla Flat* (1935) stands as a testament to Steinbeck's ability to blend social realism with mythic symbolism, offering readers a timeless exploration of human nature and societal values. Through its rich tapestry of characters, themes, and historical contexts, the novel continues to captivate audiences and inspire critical reflection on the complexities of life.

**KEYWORDS:** Arthurian Legends, North American literature, parallelism, Lost generation.

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**Figure 2** New York World-Telegram and the Sun Newspaper Photograph Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (neg. no. LC-USZ62-123257)

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Prohibition-United-States-history-1920-1933#/media/1/478412/12143>

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**Figure 3** "John-Steinbeck" by octubrec is marked with Public Domain Mark 1.0. To view the terms, visit <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/1.0/?ref=openverse>.

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# 1. Introduction

The study of English literature is important for a future translator of this language for several reasons. Firstly, it allows us to understand and appreciate the literary works of some of the greatest writers in history, such as William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, and many others. Just as we can learn from John Steinbeck, by reading and analyzing their works, we can gain insights into the human condition. Explore different perspectives, and learn about the social, cultural, and political contexts in which they were written. Also, studying English literature can help us develop critical thinking and analytical skills, as we learn to analyze and interpret complex texts, identify literary devices and techniques and evaluate different interpretations of a particular work.

In the social analysis presented in this thesis, the racial context and backstory in the novel, as well as John Steinbeck's personal life, are crucial factors to know about how Hispanic Americans lived in the early 1930s. And how the Hispanic community in the United States can be represented through literature. By the inclusion of additional information and details about the racial context and John's personal life, one can better understand the character's motivations and the societal forces that shape his experiences throughout the story. Furthermore, exploring the novel's backstory will add a layer of richness to the overall plot and make it more engaging for the audience.

The state of the art around this work relies basically upon a couple thesis on the influence of the Arthurian legends related to the literary works of John Steinbeck. Along with these theses, there has also been research supporting the fascination of John Steinbeck with Arthurian legends, which will be referenced along this work. The first thesis by Luft

Jr., T. (2023), *The Acts of John Steinbeck: Medievalist – A Dive into John Steinbeck's Adaptation of Thomas Malory's Le Morte D'Arthur*, argues for the significance of Arthurian mythology in Steinbeck's life and work: "The Matter of Arthur is the Matter of Me." As mentioned, it is a well-documented, although briefly studied, fact that Steinbeck drew on Arthurian themes in his writing." (Luft Jr., T. 2023: p.15). The stronger influence on Steinbeck's life than the Biblical metaphor in *East of Eden* or the rugged agrarian milieu of Salinas, California. (Luft Jr., 2023). Steinbeck's *Acts* brings the best elements of *Le Morte D'Arthur* (1485) in an understandable, yet profound American vernacular while also breathing life into the shortcomings present in Malory's fifteenth-century tale.

The second thesis, *The influence of neomedievalism in the adaptation of "Le Morte d'Arthur" by sir Thomas Malory: intralinguistics, intersemiotics and resemiotization* (López, 2019). As López describes, his work analyzes the relationship between *Le Morte d'Arthur* by Sir Thomas Malory and a selection of specific works from the last fifty years. Based on the above novel, López tried to make an updated translation for the contemporary audience. It also approaches the study the effects of the application of the different translation theories –intertextuality, intersemiotics, remediation and transposition. In order to evaluate the credibility of the texts, novels and films. Into modifications that have been made over time. As John Steinbeck strive to present his own interpretation of the Arthurian narrative for a variety of motivations. for the several causes that have prompted him to create his own interpretation of the Arthurian legend.

This study focusses on the sociological criticism of John Steinbeck's novel *Tortilla Flat* (1935), an analysis of parallelism with the extended and classic novel of Thomas Malory *Le Morte D' Arthur* (1485). Focus into John Steinbeck's contemporary era and

historical background. Along with topics and symbols of friendship, loyalty, the simple pleasures of life and social issues faced by Americans just as tragedies like the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression were both social issues were the principal influences of many Steinbeck's writings.

His work as a reporter served as another source of inspiration for his writing. His writing style has caused controversy and provided a distinctive perspective on being an impoverished, low-income American. He was born into a middle-class family, a citizen facing many social problems. Through his writing, he transformed his whole point of view of life into a critique of the society around him. He witnessed firsthand Hispanic Americans' social and economic exploitation while living in Salinas Valley working summers alongside the migrants who diligently picked fruit and vegetables in work seasons. It explores how he stands for the Spanish-speaking society residing in the USA, primarily to Mexican heritages and cultural origins (*Chicanos, Paisanos, Latinos*). Furthermore, John Steinbeck hero-worshiped immigrants, farmers, paisanos, and striking workers equally. Steinbeck's attractive representation of the California environment also enriches his other famous works and novels.

The starkness of their condition seemed to be reasoned. Thousands of Californians understood his ideas. He also criticized economic issues and transformed them into novels, for example, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and *Of Mice and Men* (1937). Both novels are situated in the Great Depression, describing the injustice and hard life that immigrants suffer to reach the American dream. This is a way to make all readers reason and change their perspective of life. Just as WWI and Prohibition are crucial key factors in *Tortilla Flat* (1935) and all these historical events affected all the different ethnic groups living in the United States. Compared with *Tortilla Flat* (1935) shows the historical events previously

mentioned. the effects of WWI are related at the beginning of the novel, with a group of friends recruited to infantry, separating their paths for a while. The main character “Danny” comes back home from WWI, the biggest holocaust event that the world suffers. Those soldiers who came back from war were true heroes, those who never participate were seen as shameless expatriates and even a penalty of one-month imprisonment could be imposed.

John Steinbeck delivers a combination of joyful and pitiful feelings that can be found by his audience of his novels. In the middle of the crisis of the Great Depression people needed to empathize with other people's tragedies. Then, they can appreciate the wonders of nature, luck, and life. Just as John Steinbeck was inspired by his contemporary age to create the personalities of Danny and his friends, the main characters in *Tortilla Flat* (1935), a critical factor of why *Tortilla Flat* was one of the best-selling books in 1935 and his first great success is that Steinbeck teaches us that life can be enjoyed without riches, social positions, and inheritances. “Happiness is better than riches,” said Pilon, “if we try to make Danny happy, it will be better than giving him money.” (John Steinbeck, 1935: p. 92).

Moreover, John Steinbeck used elements from English literature combined with American-Californian literature style to create *Tortilla Flat* (1935). This is not just an analysis of the historical background but an analysis and description of the experiences he acquired to define his literature movement by sharing time and learning with the most excellent writer of the decade. The so-called Lost Generation was a US origin migrated group of artists that traveled to Europe with new modernist literature; this would be an excellent experience for Steinbeck to reach his literature movement. The group was composed of expatriates, and authors like Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Henry Miller, John dos Passos, and William Faulkner. These were the most

important exponents of American writers living mainly in France and novelists participating in WWI.

The literary works of the Lost Generation impacted society since they illustrated the repercussions of war on individuals. The awful feeling about war was that it robbed men of their liberty, disillusioned the populace, and made them yearn for a more romantic and peaceful time.

This thesis also explores medieval and Christian literature by introducing Arthurian legends' classics and mythical characters. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, this literary movement originated in Europe and the eastern Mediterranean from as early as the founding of the Eastern Roman, or Byzantine, Empire around AD 300 for medieval Greek, from the time after the fall of Rome in 476 for medieval Latin. The legends have profoundly influenced literature, art, and even politics and continue to captivate audiences today.

The Arthurian legends are essential because they offer a glimpse into the values and beliefs of medieval society, particularly regarding chivalry, honor, and loyalty. King Arthur and his knights' tales are often seen as exemplars of these virtues and have inspired many. The medieval era was a prosperous time for romanticized retellings of historical events and heroic tales of victory on the battlefield. A parallelism is established between the main characters of *Tortilla Flat* (1935) and the legends of King Arthur, more specifically with the Novel. *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485) by Thomas Malory.

Thomas Malory was an English writer who lived during the 15th century. He is best known for his work *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485) a compilation of Arthurian legends that he translated and adapted from various French sources. *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485) tells the story of King Arthur, his knights of the Round Table, and their quests for glory and

chivalry. The manuscript became a famous and influential work of literature, and it helped establish King Arthur's legend as a cultural icon in English-speaking countries. Despite his literary accomplishments, Malory's life was marked by violence and criminal activity, and he spent many years in prison for various offenses.

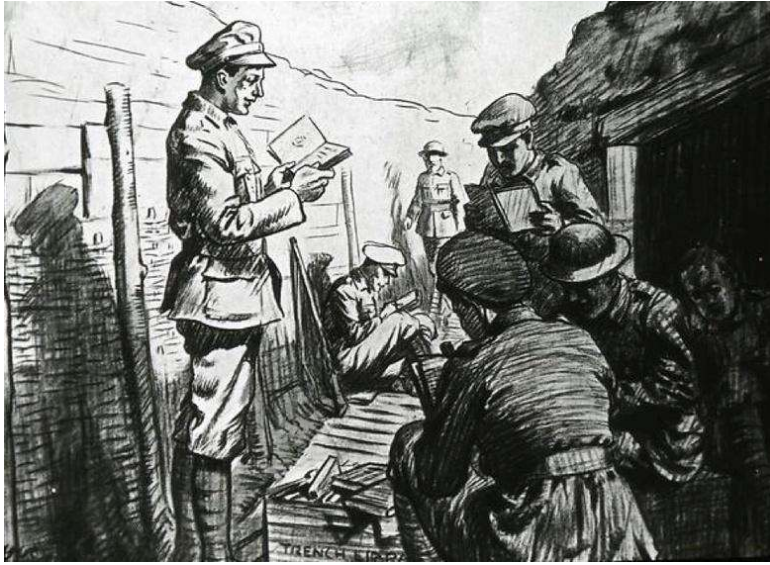
The novel is divided into eight books, each telling a different part of King Arthur's and his knights' story. The first book introduces the character of King Arthur and tells the story of how he became king by pulling the sword from the stone. The subsequent books tell various stories of Arthur's reign, including his battles with other kingdoms, his establishment of the Round Table and the code of chivalry, the quest for the Holy Grail, and the doomed love affair between Lancelot and Guinevere.

As proposed by Gurpegui (2022: p. 74), the author himself, pointing out the analogies between Danny and his friends concerning respect to King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, remotely directed the reading "For Danny's house was not different from Round Table, and Danny's friends were not They were different from her knights." On this basis, we can interpret that John Steinbeck's novel was influenced by and based his characters on Arthurian legends; some examples are in the heading of the chapters, the writing style, the adventures of the group of friends, symbols that are also presented in the novel of Sir Thomas Malory.

## 2. Steinbeck's contemporary era (1920-1940)

The first essential topic shown in *Tortilla Flat* (1935) is WWI. An international conflict that changes, not just the world's socioeconomic status, but also the social perspective of literature in some way. Many readers found solace in literature during wartime. Authors turned to the writing activity as their weapon while using their influence and notoriety to oppose violence and repression. Other authors used their artistic talent to convey the poverty and low expectations that characterized society's turnover. The war caused unprecedented suffering to millions, not to mention the consequences of the historical events, even post-war, and the change of ideologies that impacted many concepts of life. It is fundamental to mention this historical event because *Tortilla Flat* (1935) starts when the novel's main character (Danny) comes back home after WWI. Compared to John Steinbeck's personal life, he moved to Europe after studying at Stanford University. He shared time with a group of American writers in Europe (Lost Generation) who were also influenced by this tragic event

## 2.1 World War I and Literature



*Figure 1 Image courtesy of Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries.  
<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/sll/research/the-fictional-first-world-war-imagination-and-memory-since-1914-628.php?fbclid=IwAR03ZrXJu73wimrLRKJjpuOAqj1kKYuJYpc-4KUQ99sUs5VS>*

To briefly introduce WWI, History Channel describe World War I as a global conflict that began in 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, which resulted in a war across Europe that lasted until 1918. The conflict involved the Central Powers, consisting of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire, fighting against the Allied Powers, which included Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Romania, Canada, Japan, and the United States. The war introduced new military technologies and trench warfare, which led to unprecedented destruction and loss of life, with over 16 million people, including soldiers and civilians, losing their lives when the war ended and the Allied Powers claimed victory. The participation of the United States of America e into World War I started with President Wilson leading America into war to make the world safe for democracy.

The alliance of the Americans was, without doubt, an indispensable key for the European alliance countries to win the war, in socio-economic terms, as proposed by the editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2022): The American military contribution was as important as the economic one. The Selective Service Act of May 18, 1917, introduced a system of conscription. Still, many months were required to raise, train, and dispatch to Europe and expeditionary force". Between 1917 and the war's end, American loans to the Allies totaling \$7,000,000,000 ensured a steady supply of American food and weapons across the Atlantic

In light of World War, I, poetry dominated literature at that age. Thousands of poems were written about the experience of being at war. Likewise, while writers and the rest of the world struggled with the repercussions of the war, they produced profound and ground-breaking work in response. Writing memoirs and diaries, which supply personal descriptions of what it is like to be at war, and poetry have become popular forms of relaying the realities of war.

According to Pope (2011), literature provides a reasonably reliable indicator of the ideologies and trends of a particular culture. British literature in the years leading up to WWI was primarily intended as entertainment. The First WWI Bolted society into the reality of battle and profoundly altered literature by transforming how people handled their feelings. The harsh realities of an all-encompassing conflict exposed the frivolity of pure amusement and raised issues related to sacrifice, justice, patriotism, love, and life and death. The literary style changed from joyful, lighthearted storytelling to sad memories and pessimistic outlooks of a generation that had seen grief and suffering on a colossal scale. The disillusionment that grew out of the war contributed to the emergence of modernism, a genre that broke with traditional ways of writing, discarded romantic views of nature, and

focused on the interior world of characters. Woolf's novels reflected this emerging tone, as did the works of Joseph Conrad (*Heart of Darkness*) and James Joyce (*Ulysses*). T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," considered to be one of the most significant poems of the 20th century, presents a haunting vision of postwar society with the opening lines (Onion, 2018: p. 1)

Post-war poetry was a method for people to deal with that suffering. To overcome all the bad experiences they had just lived, to transform the violent, gory events into glory. Furthermore, poets and writers like Wilfred Owen, Virginia Woolf, and Ernest Hemingway were the maxima exposed.

Through Wilfred Owen, society receives epic poems based on his experiences. Many of his poems reflect the circumstances in which they found themselves. Living in filthy trenches with rats, dead bodies of friends, frequent shell bombards, and the daily sight of death took a toll on many people and contributed to their resentment against dying for a cause they did not wholly comprehend. All of his poems, such as *Futility* (1918), *Strange Meeting* (1919), *Anthem for Doomed Youth* (1917), *Arms and the Boy* (1918), *The Send-Off* (1918), *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young*, *Mental Cases* (1918) and *Insensibility* (1918) describe how the war ends and how war corrupts everything in its path; he finds the good side of it.

A further instance of the development of the new literature movement is demonstrated with one of the most famous works of Ernest Hemingway during WWI his book *A Farewell to Arms* (1922) relates a fascinating love story between a soldier and a nurse set against the chaotic, desolate backdrop of WWI. It is among the writer's most autobiographical: Hemingway served as an ambulance driver during the war, was severely wounded on the Austro-Italian front, and was sent to a hospital in Milan, where he fell in

love with a nurse, according to Amanda Onion (2022 pp.3). At a young age, Ernest Hemingway contributed to society with his literature; also, he is the essential author of Lost Generation a group of writers influenced by the post-war group that later influenced John Steinbeck's literature movement style in writing. In conclusion, WWI have performed a significant role in expanding literature to a more personal style that resonates with readers. The impact of WWI can still be felt in the literary world today, as writers continue to draw upon them as a source of inspiration and motivation to create works that are both meaningful and engaging.

## **2.2 The Great Depression**

The Great Depression was the worst economic disaster in American history, the most considerable economic misery ever to affect the industrialized world, from the 1929 stock market crash until 1939. The world was concerned even though it started on Wall Street, New York. For instance, The Great Depression began in August 1929, representing the end of the Roaring Twenties.

The principal cause of this global crisis was a series of financial crises punctuated by the contraction of markets. According to Richardson, G. (2013: p. 1). These crises included a stock market crash in 1929, regional banking panics in 1930 and 1931, and national and international financial crises from 1931 through 1933. The downturn hit bottom in March 1933, when the commercial banking system collapsed, and President Roosevelt declared a national banking holiday. Sweeping financial system reform

accompanied the economic recovery, interrupted by a double-dip recession in 1937. Return to full output and employment occurred during the Second World

During the Great Depression, the impact of bank crashes was not limited to individuals but entire families. The sudden disappearance of their life savings left them vulnerable and helpless. As time passed, these families were forced to part with their belongings, including their homes and properties. The unemployment rate was alarmingly high, with approximately one out of every four workers losing their jobs. The situation was dire, and the consequences were severe, with sickness and suicide becoming everyday occurrences. Despite the devastation, John Steinbeck's literary works captured the essence of this period and shed light on the struggles faced by those affected by the Great Depression. As Americans suffered home losses across the nation, people in need gathered in cardboard shacks known as "Hooverilles" on the outskirts of cities. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of unemployed people crisscrossed the nation on foot and in boxcars in vain attempts to find work. Though few people were hungry, many people suffered from malnutrition issues.

The economic collapse threw the United States into a crisis it recovered from in WWII. However, it was also a remarkable artistic revolution. The Great Depression inspired some of the greatest works of literature, including John Steinbeck's classic *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Dos Passos' *USA Trilogy*, and F. Scott Fitzgerald's story *The Great Gatsby*.

As a result, the Great Depression was a critical element in the massive success of *Tortilla Flat* (1935). Society, just like Americans, Afro-Americans, and Hispano-Americans may identify with the principal characters and the context of the novel, which relates to how simple and delightful life can be without any material possessions or wealth.

Also, the story describes how these characters deal with the great depression; their lives were affected by the lack of opportunities and the demand to serve their country. “Danny said: Here we sit, homeless. We gave our lives for our country, and now we have no roof over our head” (John Steinbeck, 1935: p. 24). Money can change the mentality of each character, going to the limits of greed or kindness in friendship.

### 2.3 Prohibition



Figure 2 New York World-Telegram and the Sun Newspaper Photograph Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (neg. no. LC-USZ62-123257) <https://www.britannica.com/event/Prohibition-United-States-history-1920-1933#/media/1/478412/12143>

All over the country, the Prohibition era lasted from 1920 until 1933. The Eighteenth Amendment—which illegalized the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcohol—was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1917. The amendment was ratified in 1919 by three-quarters of the nation's states required to make it constitutional. That same year,

the Volstead Act was also passed, which engineered how the U.S. government would enforce Prohibition. The nationwide moratorium on alcohol would stay in place for the next 13 years. At that point, a general disenchantment with the policy—affected by factors ranging from the rise of organized crime to the economic malaise brought on by the stock market crash of 1929—led to its disbandment at the federal level by the Twenty-first Amendment. The Prohibition of alcohol continued to exist at the state level in some places for the next two decades, as it had for over a half-century before the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919. Additionally, according to Lerner (2011: p. 1) President Herbert Hoover's 1928 description of Prohibition was:

A great social and economic experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching in purpose" entered the popular lexicon as "the noble experiment." It was unfortunate for the entire nation that the experiment failed as miserably as it did. Prohibition's first economic consequences were primarily detrimental. Numerous employments were lost due to the closure of breweries, distilleries, and saloons, including thousands of positions for barrel builders, truck drivers, servers, and other related crafts. The unforeseen effects of Prohibition on the economy didn't end there. Government tax collection was one of Prohibition's most significant repercussions. Before Prohibition, several states largely financed their budgets through excise taxes on the sale of alcohol. In New York, alcohol taxes provided over 75% of the state's income. The moment Prohibition went into effect, that money was gone. At the national level, Prohibition cost the federal government about \$300 million in additional costs and \$11 billion in lost tax income.

Finally, Millions of Americans became criminals because Prohibition expanded the illicit alcohol trade. Courtrooms and jails flooded as the decade passed, and the legal system could not keep up. In cases involving prohibition, many defendants had to wait more than a year for trial. The "plea bargain" became a prevalent practice in American law for the first time as the legal system used it to clear hundreds of cases as the backlog grew. Cases with bootlegging and nightclubs were complex enough in the "Roaring Twenties."

Prohibitionists initially attempted to outlaw the sale of alcoholic beverages throughout the 19th century, led by pietistic Protestants. They sought to improve what they perceived as a broken society plagued by alcohol-related issues like drunkenness, domestic violence, and crooked politicians who operated out of saloons. Prohibition was a national law whose principal purpose was to deliver benefits to society to increase health and security. However, instead of providing health, social effects increased in crimes like bank robbery, abduction, auto theft, gambling, and drug trafficking. These consequences brought much gangsterism around the country, just like Al Capone, leader of the Chicago Outfit, made an estimated \$60 million a year supplying illegal beer and hard liquor to thousands of speakeasies he controlled in the late 1920s. The competition for patrons in speakeasies created a demand for live entertainment.

In the novel, John Steinbeck draws a similitude between the social issue of the Prohibition era and the historical background of the Great Depression. Presented and introduced in the novel as the same social issue that John Steinbeck deals with Prohibition, the novel describes it as the actual problem of society in Monterey. In this little town, wine is as important as money. The wine is the driving force behind every event that shapes the broader narrative in *Tortilla Flat*. Wine has the power to unite people together and tear them apart. It is the catalyst for jealousy, greed, and tragedy, but it also reminds us of the power of friendship, determination, and the pursuit of something essential. Wine is the conduct theme, just as similar to the society living in the United States at that moment. Alcohol was the most sought-after product. Besides, those who have money have power. The only thing that starts the friendship of both is the wine. “A little wine is a little love” (Steinbeck, 1935: p. 171). The group members are homeless, whose only occupation is to

get by any means wine, which is to get drunk and use it as a source of money to survive in the little town of Tortilla Flat.

## **2.4 American Hispanic population in the 1930s**

According to the *Pew Research Center*, The United States has a significant Hispanic and Latino population. California, Texas, and Florida have been home to more than half of the Hispanic and Latino populations in the United States (López, Bialik, & Radford, 2018). California has the highest population of Hispanic and Latino Americans with over 14 million residents. Texas and Florida follow with roughly 10 million and 4 million, respectively. New York also has a sizable Hispanic and Mexican-American community, with over 3 million people. Despite being a strong and growing society, Hispanic American culture faces various forms of racism.

Mexican-American origins vary for political and economic reasons, and Mexican immigration to the United States is currently the subject of particularly heated discussion. There were more historical events of how Mexican Americans stayed in the United States of America: the Spanish-American war, the Mexican Revolution, WWI, and the admission of Texas and California. Nonetheless, this ethnic group appears in the *census* because of the diverse Spanish speakers. Referring to the Federal Census Bureau's illustrations, we can ensure that there remained 1.3 million Mexicans living in the US in the 1930s. Mexicans were officially counted for the first time in the 1930 census. Mexican was recognized as a racial category for the first and only time that year.

According to López, Bialik, & Radford (2018), the Population with Spanish surnames was the ethnic group in the United States that suffered the most. The Great

Depression's economic downturn was hard for Hispanics. Although some higher- and middle-class families lived in more established Hispanic neighborhoods, most Hispanic immigrants to the United States in the 1910s and 1920s belonged to the working class.

They worked in a wide range of industries, such as mining, agriculture, and textile production, and frequently served as the backbone of these sectors. Although making significant economic contributions, Hispanics often had to work in the lowest-paying positions, were paid less than their Anglo counterparts, and had very little occupational mobility. Latinos were significantly disadvantaged in the 1930s due to their place at the bottom of the economic ladder and the ominous presence of racism.

Latinos were an easy target when the US economy deteriorated and employment opportunities became limited since many Anglo Americans saw them as foreigners, regardless of their citizenship status. Latinos were frequently the first to be dismissed in many areas because employers felt compelled to hire Anglo workers first. Unemployment rates in Puerto Rico, whose economy was primarily dependent on a small number of businesses, rose even more quickly than on the American mainland, reaching 36 percent in 1929. In addition to being unable to acquire jobs, Hispanics found that benefits offices and work assistance programs were closed since an increasing number of public and nonprofit organizations had a "citizens only" policy.

An analysis by Graves (2023) at California State University Northridge (CSNU) shows California's challenging times in the 20th century. Moreover, it mentions another important novel by John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) where these issues are related too.

Those who lived in the 1920s and 1930s must have felt like they were on a roller coaster. A decade of extraordinary success was followed by the biggest economic collapse

in the state's history, in a dizzying cycle of boom and bust. Pipe City in Oklahoma, for example, was packed with destitute, unemployed workers and their families. The disaster of the Maco helium-filled dirigible echoed California's declining economy. The 1930s' hard circumstances spurred a worrisome rebirth of nativism; towns transported thousands of Mexican icers, resulting in California's "Okie subculture" a style of life that still thrives today. The 1934 San Francisco General Strike halted the Bay Area and drew national attention—Boom and Bust deportees across the border.

Deportees, Paisanos, Mexicans, and Hispanic Americans. All those societies identify with a single culture, with most people residing in California. They simply suffered in the same way as white Americans, but there was a racial disparity in opportunities. They accuse them of taking too many jobs, and the government launches a drive to deport at least 100,000 illegal California residents from the United States to Mexico. This arouses even more strong hatred for both nationalities Graves (2009: p. 5). As a Hispanic in America, life might be a constant struggle. Discrimination because of one's Hispanic roots is a harsh reality that not only limits professional growth but also affects overall quality of life. It's essential to acknowledge the challenges faced by this community and work towards creating a more inclusive society. Only then can we ensure equal opportunities for all and to new brighter generations.

Discrimination based on skin color has deep historical roots in Latin America and the Caribbean. Centuries ago, a hierarchical or caste system was established in the Americas, tying privilege, individual worth, and access to opportunities to one's skin color, race, and birthplace. This was further shaped by the arrival of enslaved people from Africa

across the region and the mixing of Indigenous, European, and African populations (Greenwood, 2021: P.1).

Knowing the Hispanic population in the United States in 1930 is essential. The racial context and the personal life of John Steinbeck's backstory that develops in the novel and is the most important factor of this social analysis and the parallelism between the two novels, how he represents the Hispanic culture as the nobility of the knights of the Arthurian legends. In other words, any Hispanic racial origin can be as important as the American race that tried to minimize them, that they are not a weak or minority race. Instead, they are a race of strong, noble, hard-working people who have benefited American society and have every other right to citizenship as citizens. The protagonist's racial origins in Tortilla Flat are Hispanic. It is unclear if Danny's anger is motivated by latent insecurity over his racial identity. Steinbeck establishes Danny's racial identity enigma from the start when he describes the Protagonist's behavior when asked about his race. "Whenever [Danny is] questioned concerning his race, he indignantly claims pure Spanish blood and rolls up his sleeve to show that the soft inside of his arm is nearly white" (Tyler, 2022: p. 1).

The character of Danny in the story is initially portrayed as an average paisano who enjoys life by being lazy and drinking too much. However, as the story progresses, we see Danny's character develop into a strong and intelligent man. He becomes the leader of his group of paisanos and earns the respect of the other people in the little town. This transformation gives him the characteristics of the code of chivalry, which is a reminder of the Hispanic culture's nobility and strength.

The representation of Hispanic culture as the nobility of the knights of the Arthurian legends is significant because it challenges the common perception that American culture is

superior to all others. It reminds us that any racial origin can be as important as the American race that tried to minimize them. Hispanic culture is a race of strong, noble, hard-working people who have benefited American society in many ways. They have contributed to the growth of the country in various aspects such as social and cultural factors, habits, traditions, beliefs, and in economics and civic-political.

### 3. John Steinbeck & The Lost Generation



*Figure 3 "John-steinbeck" by octubrec is marked with Public Domain Mark 1.0. To view the terms, visit <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/1.0/?ref=openverse>.*

One of the greatest American novelists, playwrights, essayists, and short-story writers of his time. Born on February 27, in Salinas, California. Raised in a humble and working family in Salinas. He spent his summers working on local ranches while growing up in a small town, where he was exposed to the complicated lives of migrant workers. Even though he was a working man, his true passion was writing; at age fourteen, he already desired to become a professional writer. He starts with poems and short stories. In 1919, he studied at Stanford University. After six years of studies, he finally decided to

drop out of college in 1925 and move on to become a freelance writer. He spent a brief period in New York City working as a construction worker and a newspaper writer before returning to California and taking a position as a caretaker in Lake Tahoe, where he started his literary career.

Reading John Steinbeck also expanded the horizons of what was occurring in the country. He started reading about social and economic issues that were prevalent. Topics already mentioned and described as Immigration, Prohibition, post-World War I, and the great depression. The challenges faced by Americans living in the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression were a central topic in several of Steinbeck's writings. It affects the majority of the Mexican-American community. He also drew inspiration for his writing from his work as a reporter. His writing has generated debate and provided a distinctive perspective on life for struggling low-income Americans.

John Steinbeck's literary contributions expanded to over thirty-one works throughout his career. Nevertheless, there is a brief description of his career's three most important books (Lombardi, 2010: p.2).

Steinbeck published 30 books, including several well-respected by critics and the public. Among those are *Tortilla Flat* (1935). about a charming group of paisanos who live near Monterey; *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). About a farming family fleeing the Dust Bowl of Oklahoma for California during the Great Depression; and *Of Mice and Men* (1937) a story of two itinerant ranch hands struggling to survive."

John Steinbeck is also known for being part of a group of famous and influential American writers who went to live in Europe after World War I ended, just in Paris, France. Furthermore, Steinbeck served as a war correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune during WWII—a Nobel and Pulitzer prize-winning Author.

John Steinbeck was a controversial figure throughout his career, with many of his works banned or censored. However, he continued to write about issues that he believed were necessary, including social justice and environmentalism. Despite this opposition, Steinbeck remained committed to writing about topics that he deemed necessary. Steinbeck was also a war correspondent during WWII.

In addition to his writing, Steinbeck was a passionate traveler and adventurer, undertaking extensive journeys across the United States and Mexico. His travels provided him with a wealth of experiences and insights that he incorporated into his writing with great effect, making his works even more remarkable. Steinbeck's contributions to the literary world were recognized when he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962. His legacy as one of the greatest American writers of all time endures to this day, inspiring generations of readers and writers alike.

## American Lost Generation Authors

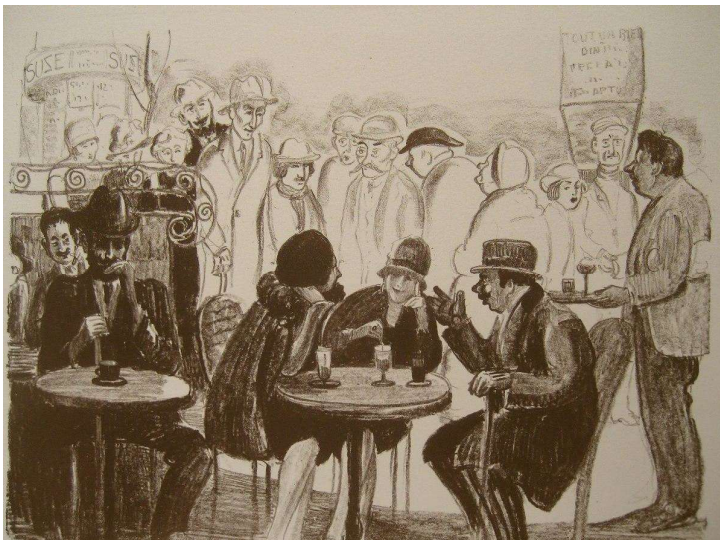


Figure 4 John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston. <https://writersinspire.org/content/lost-generation>

This chapter lists the most famous core of Lost Generation writers, a group of American expatriates who lived in Paris, France, during the 1920s. These authors deliver a new concept of literature with new norms and ideas based on the criticisms of what society turns into after their lost hope from their lives in the war. This group worked in Europe from the end of WWI until The Great Depression. For American writers of the lost generation, it was a new beginning to move to Europe and work with intellectuals as they shared the same ideas and found themes and styles that would come to define modernist literature.

After the loss and destruction that WWI caused, groups of creative artists felt disillusioned. This feeling was considered part of the Lost Generation. Many people who reached adulthood during WWI became aggressive, rebellious, and aimless—"lost" because they lost trust in conventional norms and goals. This cynicism and disappointment characterized the 1920s literary and cultural scene (Morton, 2020).

The term Lost Generation became associated with a group of writers and artists with whom Hemingway worked in Paris, France, during the early 1920s. In Europe, they have also been called "the generation of 1914." However, the term also broadly refers to all who reached adulthood during WWI.

The Lost Generation had a fundamental impact on American literature and culture. Their works challenged traditional literary conventions and explored themes of disillusionment, alienation, and the search for meaning in a rapidly changing world. Their writing often reflected their experiences during WWI and the Roaring Twenties. The liveliness of the period stands in marked contrast to the historical crises and their critiques of American society. The Lost Generation writers also played a crucial role in shaping

Europe's literary and artistic scene during the 1920s and 1930s. Their works continue to be studied and celebrated as essential contributions to American literature and culture.

Gertrude Stein is credited for the term Lost Generation, though Hemingway made it widely known. According to Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast* (1964), she had heard it used by a garage owner in France, who dismissively referred to the younger generation as a *Génération Perdue*. In conversation with Hemingway, she turned that label on him and declared, "You are all a lost generation." He used her remark as an epigraph to *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). This novel captures the attitudes of a hard-drinking, fast-living set of disillusioned young expatriates in postwar Paris (Augustyn, 2022: p. 1). The term referred to that group of men and women who came of age during WWI.

Another vital author from the lost generation was F. Scott Fitzgerald, a 20th-century American short-story writer and novelist. Although he completed four novels and over 150 short stories in his lifetime, he is perhaps best remembered for his third novel, *The Great Gatsby* (1925) today widely considered the great American novel. Fitzgerald is famous for his depictions of the Jazz Age (the 1920s), especially in his novel *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald conveyed in *The Great Gatsby* the hope America promised its youth and the disappointment it felt when America failed to deliver. This —the promise and failure of the American Dream— is a common theme in Fitzgerald's work. Other common themes in his work include society and class, wealth and materialism, and romantic idealism.

### **3.1 Ernest Hemingway**

He was born on July 21, 1899, in Oak Park, Illinois. He was an American writer and journalist. His economical and modest writing style, as well as his adventurous life and

public persona, significantly impacted 20th-century fiction. Most of Hemingway's writing was completed between the mid-1920s and the mid-1950s, and he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954. He released two non-fiction books, six short story collections, and seven novels. Posthumously, three novels, four collections of short stories, and three non-fiction books were all released. These are widely regarded as American literature classics in many cases.

Raised in Chicago, he received his education in public schools and started writing in high school, where he was active and exceptional. The summers he spent with his family on Walloon Lake, close to Petoskey, Michigan, were the most critical times in his childhood. After that, he enlisted in the American Red Cross as an ambulance driver and served in WWI. He was wounded on the Austro-Italian front at Fossalta di Piave on July 8, 1918, when he was only 18. Hemingway influenced too many writers, primarily the incredible writers of the Lost Generation. As proposed by Young (2022: p. 3):

Ernest Hemingway, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954, had a great impact on other writers through his deceptively simple, stripped-down prose, full of unspoken implications, and his tough but vulnerable masculinity, which created a myth that imprisoned the author and haunted the WWII generation.

Ernest Hemingway wrote *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), which were full of the existential disillusionment of the Lost Generation expatriates; For *Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), about the Spanish Civil War; and the Pulitzer Prize-winning, *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952).

### 3.2 John R. Dos Passos

He was born on January 14, 1896, in Illinois Chicago. John Dos Passos rose to prominence primarily because of his novel *Manhattan Transfer* (1925), which pioneered a significant urban current in contemporary fiction with its expansive and objective view of the city.

He studied at Harvard University in 1917 and made friends with academics affiliated with the "Harvard aesthetes" group. He also served as an ambulance driver on the French front during WWI, and that knowledge inspired his book *Initiation of a Man: 1917* (1920). His next film, *three Soldiers* (1921), was a critical success due to its virulent antiwar sentiment. He was an American author of the post-World War I and a vital member of the so-called "Lost Generation," a diverse group of writers that frequently includes novelists Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald and poets like Ezra Pound. John Dos Passos rose to prominence primarily because of his novel *Manhattan Transfer* (1925), which pioneered a significant urban current in contemporary fiction with its expansive and objective view of the city.

John Dos Passos meant to combine modernist techniques with a radical worldview in his U.S.A. trilogy to condemn what he considered the individual's decline, which was indicative of the recent experience and the alienation caused by America's capitalistic system. His usage of both traditions put his writings in a difficult position with critics, pushing them to the fringes of the canon of American literature. According to Kuiper, K. (2022: p.1) "Modernism, in the fine arts, is a break with the past and the concurrent search for new forms of expression. Modernism fostered experimentation in the arts from the late 19th to the mid-20th century, particularly in the years following WWI."

### 3.3 Gertrude Stein

Born on February 3, 1877, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Stein was raised in Oakland, California and her early years were spent in Vienna and Passy, France. She enrolled in the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women, renamed Radcliffe College, in 1894. There, she studied psychology with the philosopher William James and earned her degree in 1898.

Stein moved in 1903 to Paris, where she became a great American writer with a growing and eccentric personality. Stein's writing style was modernist and avant-garde, such as Dos Passos. Stein was a notable member of the Lost Generation. Stein led the most significant artists and writers of the period between World Wars I and II, inviting writers and artists like Picasso, Fernande Olivier, and André Derain, including Ernest Hemingway, Sherwood Anderson, Ezra Pound, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. She hosts the most outstanding artists at her residence in Paris. She not only helped the artists by collecting their work but also gave them advice and engaged in dialogue with them about their work. Stein was so influential and respected that her judgments and comments could increase or destroy any reputation. As described by (Britannica, 2022: p. 1)

“The eccentric Stein was not modest in her self-estimation: “Einstein was the creative philosophic mind of the century, and I have been the creative literary mind of the century.” She became a legend in Paris, especially after surviving the German occupation of France and befriending the many young American servicemembers who visited her. She wrote about these soldiers in *Brewsie and Willie* (1946).

Stein's works were *Three Lives* (1909). It was her first novel to be published, is hailed as a "minor masterpiece," and tells the experiences of three working-class women.

For the public in general, for whom she remained primarily known as the originator of phrases like "Rose is a rose is a rose," her lengthy composition "The Making of Americans," written between 1906 and 1911 but not published until 1925 because it was too complicated to elaborate.

### **3.4 William Faulkner**

William Faulkner was an American Writer also awarded the 1954 Nobel Prize for Literature. During the interwar years, William Faulkner was one of the great novelists who used his writing to advance the revival of narrative techniques and the dismantling of the realist and naturalist trends of the previous century. Faulkner's work and his writing style were at a superior level to those of James Joyce, Franz Kafka, and Marcel Proust, because of the significance of his work and the influence he would go on to have. He was born in New Albany, Mississippi, on September 25, 1897.

William Faulkner was raised in the town of Oxford. He was the grandson of the famous Colonel William Clark Falkner, a colorful but violent figure who established a local railway, wrote the well-known love story *The White Rose of Memphis* (1881) and fought valiantly in the Civil War. Although in November 1918, armistice intervened before he could complete ground school, let alone fly or reach Europe, Faulkner joined the British Royal Air Force (RAF) as a cadet pilot under training in Canada in July 1918, motivated by dreams of military glory and by despair over a failed love affair (Millgate, 2022: p.1).

William Faulkner is associated with the Modernist and Southern Gothic literary movements. Most of his novels are set in the postbellum American South. His most technically sophisticated works—including *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and *As I Lay Dying* (1930)—make

use of Modernist writing techniques such as unreliable narrators and stream-of-consciousness narration.

### **3.5 Henry Miller**

He was born on December 26th in Manhattan, New York. Raised in the streets of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, his American parents have German ancestry. He studied at the City College of New York. He dropped out after two months due to a lack of respect for the faculty (He rebelled against educational methods). Furthermore, after that, he took a job in the financial center of New York with Atlas Portland Cement Company. He moves to the Western region. It was an escape from city life. His first job was as a cowboy operating on a ranch. A turning point in life for Miller was in San Diego, where he met the renowned anarchist Emma Goldman (Emma was considered the most dangerous and influential woman in America of her time).

The 20th-century American author Henry Miller is renowned for confronting how 19th-century conventions were made. He was well-known for creating fictional novels based on his experiences and for including mysticism, explicit language, sex, and philosophy in his writing. Because of their contentious nature, several of Henry Miller's most well-known works were prohibited in the United States until 1961. However, today, he is regarded as one of the most influential authors of his generation.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, after Henry Miller settled in Big Sur on the California coast, he became the center of a colony of admirers, many of whom were writers of the Beat Generation who saw parallels to their beliefs in Miller's whole-hearted acceptance of the degrading and the sublime. While at Big Sur, Miller produced his *Rosy*

Crucifixion trilogy, which consists of *Sexus*, *Plexus*, and *Nexus* (U.S. edition published in 1965). The trilogy covers much of the same period of Miller's life as *Tropic of Capricorn* and, together with that book, traces the stages by which the hero-narrator becomes a writer. In the United States, the publication of "The Tropics" led to a series of obscenity trials that culminated in a Supreme Court decision in 1964 rejecting state court findings that the book was obscene.

#### **4. Arthurian Legends Explored In *LE MORTE D'ARTHUR* By Thomas Malory**

This chapter presents the tales and descriptions of the mythical Arthurian legends. Sir Thomas Malory's deep analysis shows this legend in his famous Novel *Le Morte D'Arthur* (1485) novel that inspired John Steinbeck to create the characters of Tortilla Flat. In addition, he relates more symbols and characters that Sir Thomas Malory developed in his novel. According to Luft Jr, (2023), "Steinbeck spent years working to procure qualified knowledge on the Middle Ages, Arthuriana, and scholarly opinions on Morte. Steinbeck's efforts have passed largely unnoticed and remain unappreciated today."

Steinbeck was particularly interested in Malory's portrayal of the Knights of the Round Table and the themes of loyalty, honor, and morality prevalent throughout his work. Steinbeck drew inspiration from Malory's writing when he penned his novel *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976) a retelling of the Arthurian legends. Like Malory, Steinbeck explored the complex relationships between the knights and their code of chivalry, making his contribution to the rich tradition of Arthurian literature.

The novel explores the conflict between personal desire and loyalty to the king and the code of chivalry. Many characters struggle with this conflict, especially Lancelot, who is torn between his love for Guinevere and his loyalty to Arthur. The novel also explores the concept of fate and the tragic destiny of the characters, as many of them meet untimely ends despite their heroic deeds.

*Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485) is also a romantic and heroic portrayal of the Arthurian legends, and these legendary episodes have had a significant influence on English literature and culture. It has inspired numerous adaptations, including films, television shows, and novels, and it remains a beloved classic of English literature. The book is notable for its

vivid descriptions of battles, the chivalric code of honor, and the complex relationships between the characters. Malory's work has had a lasting impact on English literature and influenced many subsequent writers, including Tennyson, who wrote his version of the Arthurian legends.

Moreover, Malory's life is also fascinating. He was a knight and a member of Parliament, but he was also a criminal who spent a significant portion of his life in prison. He wrote *Le Morte d'Arthur* while he was imprisoned, and some scholars believe that the book was a means for him to reflect on his own life and the mistakes he had made.

In summary, Thomas Malory's contribution to Arthurian literature is significant and remains one of the most influential collections of Arthurian legends. His life story adds an intriguing layer of complexity to his work.

#### **4.1 The birth and the rise of King Arthur.**

The mythical character of King Arthur is presented as an unknown son of the royal family, the son of King Uther Pendragon, but no less, King Arthur was born in the cradle of gold. He had the blood of a king and the privilege of everything; by order of King Pendragon, he was delivered to the first poor man outside the castle gates. Delivered unto Merlin, and Merlin gave it to Sir Ector. Sir Ector christened him and named him Arthur.

In the sickness of King Uther Pendragon, Merlin asks him if his abandoned son Arthur shall be the new king after his death. Then, in front of everyone, Uther Pendragon turned to him and said: "I give him God's blessing and mine. Please pray for my soul and do good." (Malory, 1485: p. 36). As a result, he gave up the ghost and was then buried as a

king would have wanted. Thus, the queen, Beauty Igraine, and all the barons experienced tremendous sorrow.

However, the kingdom only had a king for two years. This caused a dangerous and uncontrolled society where everyone was powerful and dangerous and had the freedom to do what they wanted.

Merlin was a magician and indeed a helpful man to King Arthur. He opens the path to the crown. All the lords, Sirs, and Knights were invited to a church by Merlin. All the leaders in that room were shocked by the sword; everyone could run to it and try to pull it out like they were already king of England, but nobody could lift it. So, all the lords waited respectfully and patiently to see who would be the chosen one. “Now, said Sir Ector to Arthur, I understand ye must be king of this land.” (Malory, 1485: p. 39). After that, Arthur quickly puts the sword in the rock to pull it out in front of all the Sirs again. When Arthur was presented in front of all the powerful lords, nobody believed, so they tried again, but still, nobody was worth it. “I will well, said Arthur, and pulled it out easily” (Malory, 1485: p. 39). After that, everyone in the room kneels to his new king. Furthermore, Sir Ector tells him the truth about his royal blood. Even though he was separated from his family and lived a humble and worked life, he always meant to be the king of England.

Arthur made officers, friends, and knights. At the same time, he was getting enemies because most leaders cried because they were not gifted to lift the sword. They do not have another option but to ask for mercy for all the delay they did to Arthur.

King Arthur was a questionable king that many kingdoms in England held against him, like in the northern lands, Scotland and Wales. Arthur paraded all over England, making festivals to welcome all folks in his gratitude, but he was not well received. They

even ask Merlin why that kid will be his real King. “Then all the kings were passing glad of Merlin and asked him, for what cause is that boy Arthur made your king? Sirs said Merlin, "I shall tell you the cause, for he is King Uther Pendragon's son, born in wedlock, gotten on Igraine, the duke's wife of Tintagil” (Malory, 1485: p. 42).

Merlin always defends Arthur. He proves that he is not a fool. Moreover, it was clear that those who say "no" immediately become enemies. His path is that he will become king and vanquish all of his foes, and, until the day of his death, he will rule over all of England for a very long time, as well as Wales, Ireland, Scotland, and more countries. Some of the monarchs were by Merlin's words and thought it would be best if things turned out as he predicted, impressing others, like King Lot, who laughed at him to scorn and referred to him as a witch.

## **4.2-The Queen of Guinevere**

King Arthur starts to feel the pressure of being a single, powerful man. He realizes how many times have passed of being taught and guided by just Merlin. Moreover, he is truthfully grateful but starts to feel alone without sense.

So respectfully, King Arthur told Merlin he needed another lifestyle and rest. Moreover, to take a wife. “A man of your bounty and noblesse should not be without a wife. Now, is there any that ye love more than another? Yes, said King Arthur, I love Guinevere the king's daughter, Leodegrance of the land of Cameliard, the which holdeth in his house the Table Round that ye told he had of my father Uther.” (Malory, 1485: p. 90)

King Arthur expresses how much he loves Guinevere and how valuable and essential it is to him. However, Merlin is aware of Arthur that he is interested in the princess and Launcelot, who should love her and get her back.

On behalf of King Arthur, Merlin anticipated talking with King Leodegrance of Camelot. Merlin presents the blood and the life of King Arthur, and that King Arthur wants to propose to Guenever. Amazed by his tales, King Leodegrance was honored that a king of such prowess and noblesse would marry his daughter. King Arthur already has landed; he does not need any of King Leodegrance, which gives him even though it could delight him. Instead, King Leodegrance sends him a present that will be much more appealing to him. It was the famous Round Table. The same table received from Uther Pendragon was entirely constructed with one hundred knights. The monarch hastily ordered the marriage and coronation in the most honorable manner imaginable.

### **4.3- Lancelot**

Sir Lancelot is a knight from the Arthurian legends, known for his bravery and love affair with Queen Guinevere, King Arthur's wife. He is often depicted as the greatest knight in the realm and is one of the core members of the Knights of the Round Table. Lancelot's story is one of Western literature's most well-known tales of chivalry and romance.

Lancelot is the principal knight of this novel. He appears in almost all the books and chapters. The greatest knight of King Arthur. He is honored by all the knights of the Round Table after his return to Rome. He also won the tournaments and the battles he fought in. Not less, not because he was the most loyal knight, but not perfect. King Arthur reproved him many times. He converted to a traitor because he also loved Queen Guinevere.

Moreover, he became his protector after the death of King Arthur. Despite his flaws and mistakes, Lancelot is a beloved and iconic figure, representing the ideals of chivalry, courage, and loyalty. He is a man of contradictions, torn between his love for the queen and his duty to the king. Lancelot's story is complex, full of moral dilemmas and conflicting emotions, making him a fascinating and enduring character in literature.

#### **4.4 The Lady of the Lake**

The Lady of the Lake is in almost every book and chapter of the novel of Thomas; she is represented in many names and is mentioned in many knights. She has many knights following her. The Lady of the Lake was a renowned and powerful witch sought after by many people and knights for her otherworldly abilities. Known for her ability to provide potent and undefeated power sources like the armory supremacy armor, she was often questioned by all the folks in the kingdom about her secrets. While many people respected her, others harbored a deep-seated hatred towards her because she always requested something in return for her services.

In an adventure with Merlin, King Arthur was convinced to seek the Lady of the Lake's help. He was unarmored and needed a powerful weapon, so the Lady gave him a blade that was hidden beneath the water. King Arthur had to row and dive to find a sword and return it to the Lady of the Lake. She gave him the mighty sword Excalibur, which was the most powerful weapon in all the kingdoms. However, it had to be wielded by someone of great courage and integrity, which King Arthur possessed in abundance. The Lady of the Lake only gave him the sword with the condition that he would give her a gift in return. Days passed, and the Lady of the Lake arrived in King Arthur's kingdom, asking for her

gift. King Arthur was happy but ashamed because he had forgotten her assistance. The Lady asked for the head of a knight and a Donella, which was a rare flower that grew only in the most treacherous of places.

King Arthur asked why her request was so expensive and also asked for the name of the sword. "Excalibur," she exclaimed, and the sword's name echoed throughout the kingdom, instilling fear in the hearts of King Arthur's enemies. Meanwhile, Arthur was looking for the Lady of the Lake's gift. One of his knights, Baling, recognized the Lady of the Lake and assassinated her on his behalf. He was convinced that her mother was burnt alive because of her fault, and he sought revenge. So, he took off her head, not realizing the enormity of his actions. King Arthur was ashamed and deceived by his own knight, whom he had trusted with his life.

The Lady of the Lake is mentioned in many names and represented in many knights in almost every book and chapter of the novel of Thomas. She has many knights following her, and her power and influence are still remembered today. Her story is a reminder of the dangers of greed and the importance of fulfilling our promises, no matter how difficult they may seem.

## **4.5 Percival**

Percival, a legendary character in Arthurian literature, was the son of King Pellinore and a brother of Lamorak de Galis, a renowned Round Table knight. Though he was born into a noble family, his path to knighthood took more work. He struggled to find his place in King Arthur's court, and his worthiness as a knight was called into question by King Arthur himself.

Despite these challenges, Percival was a brave and loyal knight who played a significant role in the quest for the Holy Grail alongside Galahad, another renowned knight. After undergoing a religious conversion with the guidance of his aunt and a holy man, Percival became a devoted and chivalrous knight who upheld the New Law of faith, hope, belief, and baptism while rejecting the Devil. Percival's journey had its challenges, however. He experienced great loss and felt abandoned by the Round Table fellowship after his mother's death, which caused him to lose his way for a time. His search for the Holy Grail and his desire for glory led him to seek out Galahad, who he believed could help him achieve his goals.

Unfortunately, Percival was ambushed by twenty knights on his journey, and it seemed as though his quest for the Holy Grail would come to an untimely end. But Galahad, being the noble and fearless knight that he was, came to Percival's aid and saved his life before ultimately succumbing to his wounds. In conclusion, Percival's story is one of bravery, loyalty, and perseverance in the face of great adversity. Despite his humble beginnings and the challenges he faced, he became a respected and revered knight who played an integral role in the Arthurian legend.

#### **4.6- Modred (Meleagant) by Thomas Malory**

Mordred, the son of King Arthur, was a prominent character in the legends of King Arthur. He was one of the few survivors of the May-day massacre, where all the boys born in May were killed by King Arthur's command. Despite his royal lineage, Mordred had a tumultuous relationship with his father and became a source of conflict in the kingdom.

Merlin predicted that Mordred would murder Arthur, which set the stage for a tragic conflict between father and son.

Mordred and Arthur engaged in an intense battle for the English throne, which resulted in a fatal end for both. This event marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter in the kingdom's history. Mordred had several half-brothers, including Gaheris, Aggravain, Gawain, and Gareth. These characters had their unique paths in the legends of King Arthur and played significant roles in shaping the kingdom's fate. Despite their shared bloodline, they had their loyalties and beliefs, which often put them at odds with each other

Mordred was a complex character in the legends of King Arthur, who had a tumultuous relationship with his father and became a source of conflict in the kingdom. His tragic end marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new one. His half-brothers, who were also prominent characters in the legends, had their unique paths and played significant roles in shaping the kingdom's fate.

## **4.7 The Round Table**

The Round Table was a symbol of King Arthur's power and authority, and it already had in its ranks 150 loyal and robust knights to serve him. Respect was the most critical value in the table, and every knight was expected to uphold this value and serve with honor and dignity. These knights traveled to London with great royalty, some by water and others by land. Their arrival was a grand event, and King Arthur welcomed them with open arms. The Knights of the Round Table gave King Arthur greater pleasure than receiving immense riches, as they were the embodiment of his vision for a just and noble kingdom. Merlin, the

wise sorcerer, advised the knights to arise and come to King Arthur to do him homage. He knew that King Arthur would have the better will to maintain them if they showed their loyalty and respect.

The Round Table was a symbol of King Arthur's power and authority, and it was home to 150 loyal and robust knights who served him with respect and honor. Their arrival in London was a grand event, and King Arthur welcomed them with open arms. Merlin advised the knights to do homage to King Arthur, and they obeyed, which showed their loyalty and respect. The letters of gold found in every siege were a testament to the noble and distinguished knights who sat at the Round Table.

#### **4.8 The Holy Grail by Thomas Malory**

The holy grail is an essential symbol of these legends, representing the blood of Jesus Christ. The Departure of the Holy Grail begins with a magical text on the round table seat. The empty chair was because no men were alive, full-worthy to be at the round table. After that, the Grail quest starts by order of King Arthur; the knights need to prove themselves brilliantly. Without any armor, into a tournament at Camelot.

The holy grail is also powerful; it has healing powers in the search for this symbol. Many knights find each other in various places. They were killing each other if somebody crossed their way. Sir Lancelot, Percival, and Galahad. Also, in this tale, neither of these closest knights of King Arthur can take the holy grail because they were full of sins. Moreover, Lancelot starts to lament his sins and pray to be a better man.

## **4.9 The Sword of Excalibur by Thomas Malory**

The sword of Excalibur is well represented and described in this novel; just the one with the power to raise the sword is worthy to lead a kingdom. An average man cannot just behave well or poorly if he has an education. The novel explains that only some can earn that worthy to draw the sword. It was protected by magical powers by Merlin and the lake lady. It has always been faithful to King Arthur. Because after m it was in the stone. It was for King Pendragon before his death and in a lake before the lake was dried. Only his direct heresy can be worthy. Moreover, that is why the only and truly man who could lift the sword was Arthur; it was in his blood before he knew about his royal family legacy. “There was seen in the churchyard, against the high altar, a great stone four square, like unto a marble stone; and in the midst thereof was like an anvil of steel a foot on high, and therein stuck a fair sword naked by the point, and letters there were written in gold about the sword that said thus: “Whoso pulleth out this sword of this stone and anvil, is right wise king born of all England” (Malory,1485: p.38).

## **4.10 The Death of King Arthur**

After the betrayal of Mordred and the death in the battle of Sir Gawain, the day of avenger came. King Arthur was hurt to death on the battlefield against his son, the son who took his throne, Mordred. The two sides of each army were face to face in the field as they accorded. None of them trust their peaceful treatment. So, both were asked by their knights if they saw that sword drawn for an adder or serpent that bites one knight in his feet. He has drawn the sword for the pain. So, both host parties think that his peaceful treatment was unfaithful. Moreover, the war began.

After King Arthur looks around and sees the death of almost all the knights. War is never seen in England. He shall “Alas that ever I should see this doleful day, for now, said Arthur, I have come to mine end. Nevertheless, would to God that I wist where were that traitor, Sir Mordred, that hath caused all this mischief.” (Malory,1485: p. 729)

When Mordred heard Sir Arthur, he hurried toward him while drawing his sword. His hand. King Arthur struck Sir Mordred there with the point of his spear while he was shielded—more than one could imagine, all over the body. Moreover, when Sir Mordred realized he was mortally wounded, He used all of his strength to push up against the spear bur of King Arthur. Moreover, as he did, he struck his father, Arthur, holding the head wound from the sword's piercing in both hands. Sir Mordred collapsed to the ground after losing his helmet and other accessories. The nobility Arthur swooned often when he fell to the ground in a trance.

After the war ended, King Arthur was damaged before he died. He requests the knight that his famous sword, Excalibur, needs to be drawn in the lake, so he demands that his sword be returned to its original place.

King Arthur dies after his request for Excalibur. No man in England can believe the death of his most potent king, for so many people think he was gone to another place, and with the strength and faith of Jesus Christ, he would return to his throne. Nevertheless, five damsels and Queen Guinevere buried him in the chapel. The king died, but his mythical legends always lived.

## **5- Parallelism between Tortilla Flat & Le Morte D'Arthur (1485) by Thomas Malory**

The obsession and inspiration of Arthurian legends of John Steinbeck went further than *Tortilla Flat* (1935). *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976) are similar to the mentioned above, the Winchester Manuscript text of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485). In November 1956, he began work on the adaptation. Steinbeck had long admired the Arthurian legends. As proposed by Luft Jr (2023: p.11-12),

Steinbeck also receives next to no praise for his ability as a textual critic. Throughout the appendix to *Acts*, Steinbeck explains his various dealings with the manuscripts of *Morte*, and he works directly with those manuscripts to produce an adaptation that speaks to the modern reader. Even attempts in line-to-line comparisons by scholars between *Morte* and *Acts* fail to understand the manuscript usage of Steinbeck to create *Acts*.

It is essential to compare the Arthurian legend because it served as a basis for Steinbeck's morality, worldview, and literary methods. Steinbeck wanted *Acts* to convey to an American audience that he cared intensely about Arthur's relevance, importance, and necessity. It is intriguing how a centuries-old legend still holds such significance in modern literature.

The parallelism between both works is notorious. John Steinbeck inspired his characters by the tales of Thomas Malory because they relate to England's most famous mythical legends. Function as the core of King Arthur's codes, which are essential in English literature. So many books, novels, series, movies, and tales are based on those legends. Just as was for inspiration the novel *Tortilla Flat* (1935). The stories in *Tortilla Flat* are true stories that he lives among his friends and makes these people up with the "vulgarity of duchesses," as he describes in the novel's forward. Also, he explains how kind, honest, and good people the paisanos were.

The first parallelism elements that can be noticed are the text styles, redaction, and the enumeration of how the chapters of the novel start. The chapters are numbered with Roman numerals. Every title of each chapter begins with “how.” (e.g., How Danny, home from the wars, found himself an heir and swore to protect the helpless). It presents the central development of each chapter, referring to the title style of the branches of *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485).

The comparison between both works is justified as it sheds light on the similarities and differences between them, highlighting the significance of Arthurian legends in modern literature and how they continue to inspire and influence authors to this day. Steinbeck's work draws inspiration from Malory's tales, which function as the core of King Arthur's codes, essential in English literature.

Overall, the comparison between both works provides insight into the Arthurian legends' enduring legacy and their influence on literature and popular culture. It highlights the importance of studying and analyzing literary works to understand their significance and impact on society better.

## **5.1 The round table**

The round table represents equality. Around it, the best knights sit on equal terms. Although, of course, King Arthur had the final word or the last decision. This is represented by Danny's friends in Tortilla flat. The round table symbolizes loyalty between the folks who lived with Danny. As per the old mythical Arthurian legends, every action or request the king wanted to make was debated and consulted with the noble knights of the Round Table, and the King had the last word. Just as Danny is considered the leader of his group,

he always sees his friends as equals. He worries about all and each friend of the group. If they eat, are having a good time, are out of trouble, and always have time to drink wine and spend time with them. Danny always tries to help them as much as he can. The seven friends were Danny, Pilon, The Pirate, Pablo, Jose Maria, Big Joe Portagee and Tito Ralph.

Each character has its qualities and its actions throughout the novel. The Round Table characters are widely recognized for their chivalry, bravery, and honor. King Arthur, being a just and fair ruler, values the welfare of his people above all else. His character epitomizes these qualities. Sir Lancelot, on the other hand, is known for his unwavering loyalty to the king and his prowess in battle. Sir Galahad, who represents purity and innocence, and Sir Gawain, known for his honesty and integrity, are other notable characters. All these characters embody the Round Table's ideals, which include courage, loyalty, and selflessness. Nevertheless, everyone handled something. The relationship between Danny and his friends is based on the common benefit of goods. Goods include food, wine, brandy, landscapes, and houses to live in. Furthermore, the only way to have it all was by earning it together with the same equal weight of power or decision to make a grandiose plan. Even Though they were in trouble, loyalty, support, and friendship made this group of friends powerful in the town. The code of chivalry and their behavior's morale were essential at the Round Table.

Knights and friends must adopt the ideals of chivalry to their king. They respected each other as one, even though there were acts of selfishness. Therefore, chivalry establishes what constitutes a friend or an enemy and how to deal with them. Honor, honesty, valor, and loyalty are just a few of the chivalry codes. Nonetheless, the regulations must adapt to accommodate these requirements since the knight's various missions require various attributes and characteristics.

## 5.2 The Holy Grail is wine.

The Holy Grail can be compared and represented to the wine and brandy in Tortilla Flat, just as references to how important the Holy Grail is because, as is related in Arthurian legends, the Holy Grail has a powerful meaning of wealth and spirituality. Moreover, it became the leading enterprise of the Knights of the Round Table.

As Thomas Malory states, the Holy Grail is a source of creation of stories that deal with the search for the Holy Grail commanded by King Arthur; this has a deeper meaning than just an artifact because, in both novels, it is understood as a symbol of strength and union. In both novels, The Holy Grail and The Wine unite the brotherhood with chivalry, and while they try to look for this piece, diverse histories happen to each one of the characters; in addition, all that one that manages to obtain the Holy Grail is worthy of being in the round table of the king Arthur as in the circle of friends of Danny.

John Steinbeck's background was heavily influenced by the times of postwar and prohibition. A little bottle of wine was a common sight all over the city and was treated almost like money. It was highly demanded by all men and served as the source of friendship for Pilon and Danny. As Steinbeck wrote in his novel, "If I give him hard money, it does not express how warmly I feel toward my friend. But a present, now. And I will tell him the two gallons cost five dollars." (Steinbeck: 1935: p. 38) In a certain way, influencing others to obtain wine was a significant advantage over other people, and Pilon and Danny knew it very well. They always took advantage of the use of wine to escape complicated situations. It was like having social influence and power. The Celtic myth states that whoever drinks from the Holy Grail will absorb the magical properties attributed

to it and become an entirely spiritual, perfect knight. Similarly, since each cup was split equally among the companions, it served as a social gathering and a display of friendship.

### **5.3 Danny as King Arthur**

The rise of Danny is very similar to the rise of King Arthur in the novel by Thomas Malory. King Arthur was born in the cradle of gold despite already being a member of the royal line and the son of King Uther Pendragon. He had royal blood and all the privileges, but on King Pendagal's command, he was given to the first beggar outside the castle gates and delivered to Merlin, who then gave Sir Ector the package. After the death of King Pendegal and his request to look for his son, Merlin searched for King Arthur to occupy his throne. Well, Danny was just out of the village, settled as an average man in war, and when he came back home, Pilon told him that his grandfather had died and his wealth passed into the hands of Danny. Danny is the leader of the paisanos. He is humble and intelligent and has the power of authority over everyone in the group. Moreover, whatever happens, he always responds to help his friends out of trouble.

As a king has richness, Danny is rich as its massive locale. When he returned from the war, he found out about the death of his grandfather. From his end, Danny inherited two houses. "That reminds me," Danny said, of a story of a man who owned two whore houses with his mouth dropped open. "Pilon!" he cried. "Pilon ty little fat duck of a baby friend. I had forgotten! I own two houses." (Steinbeck, 1935: p. 24) The two houses change for good in social status but become tragic for Danny. Danny was a humble man. He just spent time out with his friends and did not even have a roof to live on. With that inheritance, he starts to have obligations. He needs to take care of something that he never really wanted.

Just as is related to Arthur legends, Arthur was an average man who came from nothing and rose as the most powerful king of all time. The sword of Excalibur can represent this similarity. Whoever can lift the sword for the stone can become a noble and powerful man, too strong to become the king.

His friends so respected Danny that he took that chance every time he had the opportunity to make Danny happy. Nobody messes around with Danny; even when they know they disappointed Danny, they will be regretful. When the pirate looks for a treasure in the forest to give it all to Danny, the pirate is the one who looks for it to free his spirit of evil because with that, he believes that he will be forgiven for burning Danny's second house, the house which he gave them so they could have a roof to sleep under, but in one of the parties they had, they burned the house in an instant.

Even From the beginning to the end. The unexplained deaths of both characters are similar: Danny is vanquished by an unidentified foe and tumbles 40 feet down a cliff. Danny got drunk, and his true evil came out. He tries to fight an enemy worthy of him; "I will go out to The One who can fight. I will find The Enemy who is worthy of Danny." (Steinbeck, 1935: p. 300) It is a tragic comedy about how Danny left the house and fell into a cliff in a flash. In comparison, Arthur is mortally wounded and flees to Avalon.

## **5.4 Pilon as Lancelot**

Pilon is represented as one of the smartest paisanos and his steadfast loyalty to Danny. He is mentally strong and a good man, but sometimes, he does evil things out of his hands. Danny's friend Pilon is responsible for several significant adventures in the narrative.

Pilon is a great, intelligent man who uses his "pitiless logic" to excuse actions like stealing and cheating. However, Pilon is very moral because he always thinks he is doing something good, whether stealing or cheating. Pilon's charade of helping others occasionally becomes genuine under the influence of Danny and Danny's home. Pilon enjoys finding a moral in every tale he hears. Although he is incredibly brilliant, his work occasionally comes off as essential.

Just as Lancelot is the second leading knight in this story, Pilon is the second most important character, the most influential to Danny, and the one character with more tales in the novel. He is mentioned in practically every book and chapter. The best knight for the king. After his return to Rome, he received honors from all the round table knights. He triumphed in the competitions and conflicts he engaged in as well. Despite being the most devoted knight, he was far from flawless. King Arthur repeatedly chastised him. Because he likewise fell in love with Guinevere, he became disloyal. After King Arthur's demise, he took over the role of his protector.

Lancelot occupied a special place as the most loyal and devoted knight to King Arthur. He was said to have been taken away by the enchantress Vivien, also known as the Lady of the Lake, after his father, King Ban of Benoit, passed away. Vivien then trained Lancelot thoroughly and motivated him to become a great knight before sending him to Arthur's court. Similarly, for Pilon and Danny, wine, food, and parties were like enchantments that brought them together and strengthened their bond of friendship.

Pilon would often be the one to organize these gatherings for his friends, creating an atmosphere of joy and celebration. However, his selfishness sometimes causes him to become angry with Danny, question his requests for help, and keep everything for himself.

Despite this flaw, the magic of their friendship endured, much like the magical properties of the Holy Grail that were said to transform the one who drank from it into a perfect, spiritual knight.

### **5.5 The Queen Guinevere as the Brandy**

The queen of Guinevere is like a precious and prized brandy, highly sought-after and invaluable. The queen of Gin represents the ultimate prize, and just as Guinevere was held captive by Meleagant, the wine is similarly guarded and protected by its owner. Mr. Torrelli, the owner of the restaurant where the brandy is kept, fiercely shields it from harm. Pilon and Danny share a deep love for the brandy and embark on numerous adventures in search of it, risking their lives for a taste of its rich flavor. However, their intense passion for the brandy also leads to fierce competition between them, causing feelings of betrayal and jealousy when one of them is unable to partake. This rivalry mirrors the tragic conflict between Lancelot and Danny, who fought to the death over their love for Queen Guinevere.

### **5.6 Meleagant as Mr. Torrelli**

In Steinbeck's novel, the character of Meleagant is represented by Mr. Torelli, who guards the wine in his restaurant. This parallels Meleagant's possession of the wine in the original Arthurian legend. Mr. Torelli is seen as a selfish and unpleasant person by Daniel's friends, who can only acquire food from his establishment by trading wine. When they are

unable to do so, they resort to stealing bread. While Lancelot killed Meleagant to rescue Queen Guinevere, Pilon, one of Daniel's friends, steals from Mr. Torelli to aid Danny.

Danny tries to take back that gift. Furthermore, as Pilon came to the rescue, he stole the vacuum- cleaner and sold it to Mr. Torrelli for more wine. "Oh, she would not let me take it," Danny protested. "Then we will help you," said Pilon. "I will take the machine, and in return, you can take the lady a present of a gallon of wine. She will not even know where the sweeping machine has gone" (Steinbeck, 1935: p. 167). The vacuum cleaner will not work either for Mr. Torrelli. So, Mr. Torrelli tries to look for Pilon and tries to kill him. Just as the rival of Lancelot and Meagalent. "Torrelli says he bought a sweeping machine from Pilon, and when he hooked it up to his light wire, it would not work. So, he looked on the inside, and it had no motor. He says he will kill Pilon." (Steinbeck, 1935: p. 171)

The rivalry between Mr. Torelli and Danny is described in detail in the novel's fifteenth chapter, titled "How the Devil in the Shape of Torrelli Assaulted Danny's House." After Danny disappears into the woods for an extended period, he suddenly reappears in Torelli's restaurant. However, Mr. Torelli's account of events is that he provided Danny with a gallon of wine. In reality, Danny attacked Torelli, insulted his wife, and stole items from his porch. In retaliation, Torelli locks Danny in his restaurant, makes him sign over his house's papers for \$25, and evicts Danny's friend.

## 5.7 The Symbol of Excalibur as The Wealth

Who was worthy of lifting the sword and becoming the strongest king and a great kingdom leader? As was already described, whoever has the sword has the power, as the tales related. To determine the monarch's successor, Merlin calls the nobility. The Excalibur sword, which is nailed to a giant on a marble stairway, materializes at the church's entrance where they are meeting—a stone stairway with a giant stone at the top.

Danny, the leader of the paisano, earns his wealth the same way King Arthur earns his riches, by inheritance. The inheritance could be the symbol that gives Danny enough power to become the leader of the paisanos, the man everyone knows and loves in the town, and the way he became so rich upon his return from the war. Love, lands, and wine was the most vital social interest of all the folks in the tortilla flat. Just as King Arthur could lift the sword, not by luck but by destiny, he was already destined to pick up the sword by the inheritance he had in his blood. Danny got the riches similarly; both characters were destined for his exploits.

Another symbol compared to the sword could be the machine gun. The machine gun Danny and his friends find on the beach after the Coast Guard cutter sinks is a significant symbol. Just like the sword of Excalibur, the sword was under the protection of the lady of the lake, and knights that searched for the sword might swing a long way and swing under the deep lake. In one tale of Percival with Lancelot, these knights found it in a dry lake, and it was impossible to identify the mighty sword of Excalibur. The fact that the paisano is unaware of the worth of such a thing and has no interest in or need for its destructive abilities is part of Steinbeck's remark on their naivety.

## 5.8- Percival as The Pirate

Both characters have too many similarities in these tales. Percival and the Pirate were two humble characters with too much power on their hands. The difference between the other knights and their friends is that both characters are silent but very important to everyone. Also, the beginning of *The Pirate* is very similar to Percival. Both were discovered and adopted by a group of friends. "The pirate lived in a deserted chicken house in the yard of a deserted house in Tortilla flat" (John Steinbeck, 1935, p. 96). He worked hard to survive, be guarded from danger by his dogs, and protect his significant hoard of money.

The Pirate was a solitary man walking around Monterey with his five dogs. Every person in the town saw him, but nobody was too brave to talk to him. He was a massive man with a severe facial expression. However, inside was a good and innocent man. The only friend that had a curiosity about the Pirate was Pilon. Pilon realizes that the Pirate must have amassed a sizable stockpile of money from his daily woodcutting. Pilon Reasoned this: "Every day that Pirate has a quarter. If it is two dimes and a nickel, he takes it to a store and gets a twenty-five-cent piece. He never spends any money at all. Therefore, he must be hiding it." (John Steinbeck, 1935, p. 93). Pilon thought the Pirate would have an immense treasure, at least a hundred dollars.

These treasures can also be compared with the Holy Grail. Lancelot recruited Percival and was one of the two knights that encountered the Holy Grail. Both have something to share with their friends. After Pilon regretted stealing the fortune of the Pirate. The Pirate becomes one of Danny's closest friends, and their friendship is firmly rooted in

tangible wealth exchanges. Nevertheless, having almost nothing to contribute to conversations, The Pirate finds comfort at Danny's house when encountering other adults for the first time. He appreciates being a member of the crew, and in return for their consideration, the Pirate gives food and wine to Danny and his friends.

## **5.9- Kings Deaths**

Finally, King Arthur's death is a subject of much debate and legend. In some versions of the story, he is mortally wounded in the Battle of Camelot and taken to the Isle of Avalon to be healed. In others, he is betrayed and killed by his son Mordred. However, the details of his death remain a mystery, and many believe that he will one day return to restore order to Britain in its time of need. Similarly, with the death of Danny in the tortilla flat, when the talisman broke after his way, the order of the group of friends was lost without a leader. Danny dies falling from the top of a risk; the causes redacted are a mystery, committed suicide or dying in the hands of the few enemies he made along the tale.

The last party from Danny was the same as the previous Battle of King Arthur; both legends died in their last breath. The gathering, now known simply as The Party, has become a myth in Tortilla Flat. There is never a discussion of another party without unfair parallels to Danny's party. In addition to the keg of potato whiskey, there was a spread of food and more than thirty gallons of wine. Later, it was said that Danny consumed three gallons of wine by himself, but Danny was no longer a regular guy. As with many legends, Danny's drinking and sexual endurance at the party propelled him to legendary status. There were fights to end all battles, not just man against man but also vast mobs of whirling

fists and soaring bodies. Danny's friends made sure to honor his memory in their way. They refused to attend his funeral with their scruffy appearances and avoided the immoral circus surrounding it. Instead, they held the pain in their hearts, which was so unbearable that they could no longer stand by the procession. "The people of the Flat melted into the darkness. Danny's friends still stood looking at the smoking ruin. They looked at one another strangely and then back to the burned house.

Moreover, they turned and strolled away after a while, and no two walked together." (Steinbeck, 1935: p. 317) As for the house, if a distant relative had come and kicked the paisanos out of Tortilla Flat, Danny's story might have eventually been forgotten. A new life would have begun in the house, and the memory of Danny and his friends might have finally faded away in the minds of the people of Tortilla Flat.

## 6. Conclusion

Literature allows readers to explore different perspectives, cultures, and periods, broadening their understanding of the world. Literature can also serve as a means of escape, providing comfort and entertainment to readers. Additionally, it can inspire and influence, shaping our beliefs and values. Through the study of literature, we can acquire valuable insights into the human condition and the complexities of life.

One of the principal approaches of this analysis is the research of main features in the movement style and historical events in Steinbeck's social background and in his contemporary age. provides insight into critical sociology and the change of literature through post-war. The disillusionment that resulted from the war helped modernism, a style of writing that rejected romantic notions of nature and emphasized individuals' inner lives, to emerge, influenced him to create *Tortilla Flat* and how his tragic-comedy novel transformed into an essential social criticism, specific to the society of Americans with Mexicans root living in California in the 1930s. John Steinbeck's key factor in this novel was representing Mexican American culture (Paisanos) as the nobility of the knights of the Arthurian legends.

The chivalry code presented the friendship values and how they are affected by material goods in a different way than the rest of the US population. Next, the novel shows us the contrasts of personalities in a small group of friends and how they are together for the common good. After, it also shows how a lack of leadership and bad friendships can quickly put an end to the good times in life. Most of all, it teaches us how life can be enjoyed with so little if we know how to approach the little gifts that life gives us in contrast with the growing consumerism all over de United States.

The novel provides a thorough exploration of a variety of significant and historically relevant themes. For example, the author examines how the experience of WWI and its aftermath shaped literature and artistic expression during the period. Additionally, the novel delves into the profound and far-reaching impact of the Great Depression over the United States, including its effects on the economy and the population as a whole. The author also offers a nuanced perspective on how the Depression specifically impacted the Hispanic population, highlighting this group's unique challenges and struggles of the social moment.

It is interesting to note that the various chapters and stories in *Tortilla Flat* are all interconnected intentionally. This could be due to the cultural, historical, and literary significant elements that have made it an essential work of literature with old medieval tradition influence. It also connects with the characters and their experiences on Steinbeck's more personal level, as described in the previous chapters.

The novel also offers and delivers a current understanding of the Arthurian legends chapters in classical and medieval literature, detailing the tales and stories of this legendary medieval in English literature. The significance of comprehending the Arthurian legend in Steinbeck's life and work has been argued in this thesis. This study delivers a general investigation of the Arthurian legends and a summary of the most famous and classic novel *Le Morte D'Arthur* (1485), a 15th-century Middle English novel by Sir Thomas Malory, which influenced John Steinbeck to achieve his most tremendous success. These legends are still very present in many different works of literature and visual arts today. Comparing the Arthurian legend is crucial for the comprehension of Steinbeck's morality, worldview, and literary methods. One can appreciate that Steinbeck wanted to convey Arthur's

relevance, moral values and importance to his American and Mexican-American audience. It is intriguing how a centuries-old legend still holds such significance in modern literature.

All in all, the parallelism of the characters in the novels of both authors, the comparison of the characters and their stories, as well as their symbols and themes bring a fresh subtle tone of solemnity which turns into one of the main reasons of the success of this and other Steinbeck's works which took him to winning the Literature Nobel prize among other accomplishments. The effects and catharsis over his audience at the very time of the publication of *Tortilla Flat* took the author to a second-to-none position among the Lost Generation authors.

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