

MARK TWAIN'S THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN AS A CRITICISM OF AMERICAN SLAVERY

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ABSTRACT

The Author Critically analyzed the book 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer' written by Mark Twain in 1876. Depicted the concoct of American Slavery through the character of the novel. The Author compared the themes of the Adventures of Tom Sawyer with the other contemporary works of Melville, and Whiteman. Author has quoted single reference to this article

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Huck Finn reminds the readers that he has already appeared in a book called The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. This book was "made by Mr. Mark Twain and he told the truth, mainly. He reminds us that at the end of that book, he and Tom had found six thousand dollars apiece. Since then, the Widow Douglas has been trying to civilize Huck and Judge Thatcher has invested the money for him, bringing a dollar a day in interest. The revisions also show how Twain reworked his material to strengthen the characters of Huck and Jim, as well as his sensitivity to the then-current debate over literacy and voting.[1] A new plate was made to correct the illustration and repair the existing copies;[3] versions with the so-called "curved fly" are valuable collectors items.[2] In 1885, the Buffalo Public Library's curator, James Fraser Gluck, approached Twain to donate the manuscript to the Library. Twain sent half of the pages, believing the other half to have been lost by the printer. In 1991, the missing half turned up in a steamer trunk owned by descendants of Gluck. The Library successfully proved possession and, in 1994, opened the Mark Twain Room in its Central Library to showcase the treasure.[4] The story

begins in fictional St. Petersburg, Missouri, on the shores of the Mississippi River, sometime between 1835 (when the first steamboat sailed down the Mississippi[5])

The widow's sister, Miss Watson, also lives in the house, and she is forever picking at Huck trying to make him do things her way. Huck is so disgusted with home life. However, as he sits and smokes, he hears Tom Sawyer's call.

As Huck joins Tom Sawyer in the garden, he accidentally trips over a root and alerts Miss Watson's slave, Jim, to the fact that something unusual is happening.

Tom and Huck meet some other boys, and Tom, wants to organize a band of robbers. From the various "pirate-books and robber-books" that Tom, has read, he binds the members of his gang together with a beautiful oath and then makes plans to "stop stages and carriages on the road, with masks on, and kill the people and take their watches and money."

After receiving a scolding from Miss Watson, Huck is also instructed in religion by the old maid, but he cannot make any sense out of her type of sermonizing. About this time, a drowned body has been found and many people think it is Huck's pap, but Huck knows that he could not be

that lucky. Unfortunately, he knows that his father would show up again someday even though he has not been around for over a year.

For about a month, the boys play robbers until Huck and all the other boys resign, for, by then, they have neither robbed nor killed anyone "but only just pretended." The romantic Tom argues with the realistic Huck about the value of make-believe and the importance of magicians. Huck questions Tom Sawyer's assertions.

After three or four months, during which time he attends school and learns to read and write, Huck sees some signs which suggest that his pap is back in town. Fearing his pap, he goes to Judge Thatcher and asks if there is any money from the investments. The judge tells him the amount, and Huck wants to give it to the judge. Huck's fears of his father's return are justified because that night when he went to his room, "there set pap, his own self!"

Pap stands before Huck looking vicious and mean. He curses Huck out for trying to get some education, for wearing nice clothes, and for the possibility that someday he might want to get some religion. He will not tolerate the idea of his son improving himself and trying to be better than his own father. He forces Huck to give him the dollar which he had gotten from Judge Thatcher and goes to get some whiskey with it. He tries to bully Judge Thatcher into giving him the rest of Huck's money, but the judge refuses. He then goes to court to get custody of Huck, and even though the Widow Douglas and the judge oppose it, a new judge gives the custody of the boy to his father. Pap promises to reform with the aid of the new judge, but the improvement is short lived.

Huck is now determined to continue with his schooling, partly to spite his pap, who thrashes Huck every time he can catch him. When Pap hangs around the Widow Douglas' house too much, she threatens him. To get even with her, he kidnaps Huck and takes him across the river to a cabin in the woods where he keeps Huck

locked up every time he leaves.

The worse thing about living in the woods is that Pap beats Huck quite frequently. One day Huck escapes in a canoe to Jackson Island from his father.

Now Huck is alone on the island for two days. On the third day, he discovers the remains of a camp fire. Huck is frightened and paddles over to the Illinois shore, but fearing discovery from some travelers, he returns and keeps watch over the place where he discovered the ashes. Soon, Miss Watson's Jim appears and Huck is awfully glad to see him. Thinking Huck is dead, Jim is frightened by Huck's "ghost." Huck tells him that he is not dead, and they talk about their adventures. Jim confesses to Huck, that he has run away because Miss Watson was about to sell him down south.

During the next few days, Jim and Huck move their supplies to a cavern at the top of the hill. One night, they see a two-story frame house float by. They catch up with it and climb aboard to see if they can find any useful articles. While there, they discover a dead man who had been shot in the back. Jim quickly throws some rags over the corpse so that Huck will not have to see this gruesome sight. They load their canoe with all the worthwhile stuff in the cabin and head back to Jackson's Island.

After breakfast, Huck wants to talk about the dead man, but Jim refuses to do so, saying that it might bring them bad luck. The bad luck comes in terms of a practical joke which Huck plays on Jim. He kills a rattlesnake and curls it up at the foot of Jim's bed, thinking it will be fun to watch Jim's reaction when he sees it. But the rattlesnake's mate crawls up around the dead one and when Jim returns, the mate bites him. After a few days, Huck becomes restless and wants to know what is going on in town. Jim advises him to dress up like a girl in some of the clothes that they salvaged from the floating house. He heads out for the shore and, in town, he finds a house of a woman who is a newcomer. He talks with

this woman, trying hard to remember that he is a girl.

It is almost one o'clock before they get below the island. At daybreak they tie the raft to a tow-head on the Illinois side which is covered with trees and bushes so that they are protected from sight. Jim builds a tent in the middle of the raft for protection from the weather. For five nights they travel down the river, lying on their backs and looking at the stars. Every night, Huck slips ashore for provisions. Five nights below St. Louis, they encounter a big storm and they board a wrecked steamboat.

Once on the steamboat, they see a light down the "texas-hall" and overhear a conversation between two robbers, Jake Packard and Bill, who are about to murder an accomplice, Jim Turner, because he threatened to inform on them.

In three more nights, Huck and Jim expect to reach Cairo, where they will sell the raft and catch a steamboat up the Ohio River. On the second night, however, there is so much fog that Huck takes the canoe and tries to find a place for them to tie up. Because of the swift current, the raft floats by and Huck cannot find Jim and the raft. He searches until he is exhausted and then falls asleep.

Huck reaches a house and he identifies himself as George Jackson and that he fell overboard from a passing steamboat. He invents another fantastic story which the people believe. This house belongs to a wealthy landowner, whose youngest child is Buck, about Huck's age. The two boys share a bedroom together and soon become friends. The house is furnished in a manner that impresses Huck but of special interest to him are the crayon drawings made by Emmeline Grangerford, who died when she was fourteen.

While living with the Grangerfords, Huck is impressed by their mode of living. Every member of the family has a Negro servant, including Huck. The only other aristocratic

family is named Shepherdson and, one day while Huck and Buck are walking, Buck jumps behind a bush and shoots at young Harney Shepherdson. Huck is confused, and Buck explains that the two families are having a feud.

One day when Huck is delivering a message for Miss Sophia Grangerford, his servant takes him down to the river. There he discovers Jim in hiding. Jim has been collecting material and preparing the raft for the day when he and Huck can continue their journey. With the knowledge that Miss Sophia has run off with Harney Shepherdson, the feud breaks out with more intensity. Now Huck escapes as quickly as possible, rejoins Jim, and they continue their journey down the river.

Two or three days and nights slide by as they travel by night and hide by day. One morning about daybreak, Huck hears two men being pursued by dogs. One man is seventy and bald; the other is about thirty. They are not acquainted but both were run out of the town because of their efforts to defraud the citizens by cheating. Once on the raft, the youngest claims to be the rightful Duke of Bridgewater. After Huck and Jim hear his sad story, they begin to treat him with respect. The older man then tells them that he is the lost Dauphin of France. Huck however, is not deceived and knows that the two are nothing more than "humbugs and frauds." The two frauds soon appropriate both beds in the wigwam, leaving Jim and Huck out in the rain. By this time, even Jim does not want any more kings and dukes to appear. The two frauds pool their resources and decide to rehearse a Shakespearian presentation of Romeo and Juliet. By this ruse, he is able to collect eighty-seven dollars and seventy cents. The Shakespearean performance is, of course, a fraud and a cheat, but those seeing it the first night do not admit being taken in and advise their neighbors to see the second performance. The third night, both audiences return, ready to tar and feather the king and the duke, but the two

con men catch on to the audience's intent and escape to the raft after having cheated the town out of four hundred and sixty-five dollars.

Later they meet a young country fellow who mistakes the king for a Mr. Wilks from England, whose brother, Peter Wilks, has just died leaving his two brothers a fortune. The king inquires into various details about Peter Wilks' family, about his financial holdings, and about other people who live in the town. Since Peter Wilks had another brother who was deaf and dumb, the king instructs the duke to pretend to be deaf and dumb, and then the two hail a steamboat and get off at the town posing as Peter Wilks' brothers. When Huck understands their plans, he feels that "it was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race." The king and the duke put on an impressive act beside the coffin of Mr. Wilks and have most of the town sobbing in sympathy. The hoax is successful for a while. The nieces of Peter Wilks show his will to the king. The dwelling house and three thousand dollars are bequeathed to the girls and the remainder of the wealth, a considerable amount, goes to the brothers of Mr. Wilks. They collect it by foul means and Huck steals and deposits it in the dead man's coffin.

Surprisingly the new set of Wilks brothers confront the king and duke, but when the handwriting of all four claimants is compared with that of letters written from England by Harvey Wilks, there are no satisfactory results. Then an argument arises about the tattoo marks on the dead man's chest, and it becomes necessary to exhume his body to find out. When the gold is discovered in the coffin, there is so much excitement that Huck is able to break loose from his captor and make a dash for the raft.

For days and days, the king and the duke dare not let Huck and Jim stop at any town for fear of being detected. But one day the king goes ashore and sells Jim as a runaway slave for forty dollars. Huck is indignant, claiming that Jim was

his property and could not be sold without his permission. Huck then has a struggle with his conscience about returning Jim to Miss Watson, but his love for Jim is more important. Huck tears up the letter that he has written to Miss Watson, decides that he is willing to "go to hell" for Jim, and goes to search for Jim—determined to free him. He discovers that Jim is at the Phelps plantation.

When Huck arrives at the Phelps', he hears the dim hum of a spinning wheel and a moment later is surrounded by dogs. A Negro woman disperses them, and a white woman, runs out and welcomes Huck identifying herself as his Aunt Sally. Huck is at a loss to know who she is until Mr. Phelps appears and his wife introduces Huck as Tom Sawyer. To Huck this is "like being born again." On the way to town in a wagon, supposedly to bring back his baggage, Huck encounters Tom Sawyer. Tom has just alighted from a steamboat and thinks that he is seeing a ghost when the supposedly dead Huck appears. Huck confides his secret about Jim to Tom, who agrees to help the runaway slave gain freedom.

Tom Sawyer discovers that Jim is a prisoner in a hut behind the house. The two boys discuss plans of freeing their friend. When they succeed in getting Jim and try to run away they hear bullet sounds. Tom is wounded in leg. A doctor treats him.

When Tom is brought home the next morning on a mattress, he is delirious. Jim is at once captured and chained again in the cabin. The doctor intervenes in Jim's behalf, however, and explains how unselfish Jim's conduct has been.

Aunt Sally concentrates on nursing Tom back to health. Tom sits up in bed and makes the startling announcement that Jim was already set free two months ago by Miss Watson's will. The whole escapade was planned for adventure only. At this point, Aunt Polly arrives from St. Petersburg and greets her sister, Aunt Sally. The identity of Tom, posing as Sid, and Huck ,

pretending to be Tom, is at last revealed. Jim is out of chains in no time and Tom gives him forty dollars for being such a patient prisoner. Jim finally reveals that the dead man in the floating house was Pap. Huck however, feels that it is time for him to head out for new territory because Aunt Sally wants to adopt him and "sivilize" him and he cannot stand that again.

Huck Finn's story has much in common with Captain Ahab's or Walt Whitman's, that Huck, too would strike the sun if it insulted him. The three best American books—Huckleberry Finn, Moby-Dick and Leaves of Grass—have in common also that they are each the most American of books. Twain's masterpiece is essentially comic, Melville's is tragic and Whitman's is beyond characterization. Huckleberry Finn, shrewd and grim as it is sometimes compelled to be, remains unique in America's national literature for its affirmative force. The freedom Huck must have, because he is that freedom, is a freedom that he wants for everyone else. It is the freedom of the storyteller, Twain's own freedom. So Huck Finn is a critique of American slavery in every way. Huck's , discomfort with civilization stems from his wholehearted rejection of guilt, sin, and solipsism, all of them Eliotic attributes, or should one say virtues? We can call Huck's , attributes his virtues, because Huck like his creator, is essentially an enlightened rationalist and critic.

Some critics call the novel as 'Huck Finn's, autobiography.' Claude Simpson observes, "The success of Huckleberry Finn lies in the fact that it has miraculously managed to transcend most of its limitations. Its language is vernacular, raised to an uncommon power of effectiveness; its milieu is heavy with local color, but wrenched free of condescension; its hero is a poor-white isolato whose simplicity of vision

never blinds him to innate truths; its dedication to adventure assures us surface excitement which cannot obscure an underlying critique of human nature. Twain builded better than he knew. He could never again quite duplicate the triumph."¹ [6], So as a critic calls it the novel is "So noble and so beautiful a book' in American literature.

Conclusion:

It is a very usefully in mathematics, in microbiological structure, in statistics and many areas of science and technology it is very essential to useful.

It is a history of the given things as mentioned in this paper to reaches a maximum goal in this world.

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Note: All the textual references are from Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and some other.

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