



Traces of Slavery and Racial Discrimination in *the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *the Adventures of Tom Sawyer* of Mark Twain

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Abstract: *Racism and race are complex and disputed concepts not only in America nation but find it in all over the world. The main purpose of this studying focus on the slavery and discrimination in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and The Adventures of Huckleberry of Mark Twain. Finn, even Mark Twain's though is a comic writer who often treats his subject satirically yet Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer are also arguing racial and slavery decimation from one character to others and some palaces. Racism in contemporary world affairs vanished, and it is what some refer to as modern racism, symbolic racism and aversive racism. But his best-known work, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, is a primary American satire which is not vindictive, not loaded with invective, and not bitter. His main goal, clearly explained, is made to look ridiculous but the irony is light and humour is powerful. Therefore, his most popular satirical novel vividly departs from the techniques most habitually associated with his satirical reputation.*

Keywords: *Discrimination, racism, ethnicity, slavery, realism*

INTRODUCTION

In 1884, America was a country under repair. Since the nation tried to remove the damage made by the Civil War, its people had short time to anxiety about the state of those who had supposedly been freed by the war. Reconstruction had been attempted and left, and there became clear to be little attention for the worsening plight of blacks during the post-war period. Into this environment Mark Twain started *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, a book that at first glance, vanished to be just a fiction about a runaway slave and a young boy going on a major Tom Sawyer style adventure in the middle of the nineteenth century. These books represented to be as reviled as it was loved by critics, with those who disapproved criticizing the book's appeal to social misfits, and those who approved telling that it was a great adventure story with major characters. A few early verifiers concerned "a moral" in the fiction, yet prepared no real study of that contention.

The novels were published in 1884 and 1876 respectively, after twenty years of the end of the Civil War and even today, it is at the very center of various heated debates between critics as far as the problem of race and slavery is concerned. As a matter of fact, these books are one of the most often forbidden books in the United States. The obvious reason is Twain's prevaricate representation of the problem concerned.

This investigation argues the problem of slavery and race in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. It will attempt to state the development of their relationship and Huck's gradual see the light as far as the slavery is concerned. The problem will be displayed more or less in chronological order. And how is slavery depicted in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and how does it reveal itself in the core identity of characters?

This essay also focuses on the historical and literary backgrounds of the novel, focusing on the issue of slavery in America as a historical aspect and as a literary theme. And as an entitled *Slavery in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* which a literary analysis of the novel occurs to demonstrate the ways Twain reflected slavery.

Methodology

According to Camp James E, Kennedy XJ. Ed., the information and expository set the tone for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* through their mixing of humor and seriousness. In its statement that anyone looking for plot, motive, or moral will be followed, banished, or shot, the statement establishes a sense of blustery comedy that pervades the rest of the novel (1963).

According to the research, in the present paper we selected the descriptive qualitative research methods and analytic strategies. It firstly collected data by going through what other people wrote about the topic under study. In the light of the available documentation (Hard books, Electronic books, magazines, and Internet), It carried out the analysis and the interpretation of data. As the practice of qualitative research methods is sometimes criticized of being nonscientific and thus invalid, and because of the sensitivity of the topic, we have struggled a lot with subjectivity in data interpretation.

In the present paper, it intends to investigate, the Critical Race Theory which best examines race and racism and on the one hand provides a critical analysis of the concepts from a legal point of view. And it select, on the other hand, the Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory to analyses and interpret the characters' behavior and motivations, and to explain how and why people behave as they do. Psychoanalytic literary criticism able to reveal something about how literary texts are actually formed, and unveil the meaning of that formation.

Literature Review

During the time among 1845 and 1885, various books were written about slavery, mostly by writers in the abolitionist and black press. The laws after the Civil War which were meant to reduce and alleviate violence and prejudice against blacks in the South haven't provided much protection for the black people. Despite the abolition of slavery, still many citizens suffer from discriminatory and humiliating practices that may infect not only the daily interaction between individuals, but also the economic system and the political and cultural institutions.

Most Americans opinion that their society is fair and just, and the legal system frames antidiscrimination legal and doctrine with this presupposition in mentality. But most critical race theorists believe the opposite is true, however; racism for them is ordinary, normal, and deeply embedded in everyday life and institutions.

Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been a target to criticism and various interpretations. Some critics or readers are reading the work through the lens of their sexual orientation. Leslie Fiedler an American literary critic, who applied Freudian psychology and social theories to American literature, claimed that there are traits of homoeroticism in the relationship between Huck, the white boy and the runaway slave, Jim. He express that the homoerotic perspective display in kind of works as Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and Melville's *Moby Dick* are a sign of the "implacable nostalgia for the infantile". Leslie has faced a stormy reaction, although he later depicts the aspects as "chaste male love" or "innocent homosexuality" which implicate another guilty form of homosexuality. (Das Santos, p 56)

Huckleberry Finn is a kind of the narrator and protagonist of the novel. Huck is the thirteen-year-old son of a vicious drunk in St. Petersburg, Missouri, a town on the Mississippi River. He is the novel narrator. He has been accepted into normal society by the Widow Douglass after the events of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. In his love for freedom, Huck rebels both against his father Pap's debauchery and against his hypocritical society. Though he is formally uneducated, he is thoughtful, intelligent and wise beyond his years. Huck refuses to obey societal conventions by befriending the black slave Jim while travelling with him on their raft down the Mississippi.

Tom Sawyer is Huck's childhood friend, a boy from a respectable family who is both bright and learned; he is also a prankish boy. Unlike Huck, Tom has been raised in relative comfort. He is not as morally mature as Huck, and his impracticality endangers himself and others, especially Jim. Tom is also self-indulgent, even selfish. But his deficiency, however, Tom exerts a powerful influence on Huck.

Analysis and Discussion

Racial structures are traditionally associated with segregation and slavery. In these structures, it is easier to see how racism functions in society. Before the 1950s, segregation made the various roles of white and black citizens evident within society. The Civil Rights movement was at a highpoint during 1954-1968, when this movement had its decisive successes. Racial racism became illegal and racial interaction in public was lawfully accepted. Therefore, the racial structure differed and racism became more covert.

However, racism and race are complex and disputed sense not only in the America yet in all over the world. We do not intend, by the present research, to place emphasis on the historical stages of racism rather than to illuminate its darker side and complexity in the American society. Racism existed throughout human history (Geismar Maxwell, 1973). It may be defined as the sentiment of hate of a person towards another either because of language or skin color, customs, or the feeling of supremacy and the belief that a special race is superior to another.

Although it is illegal in the United States, racial inequality, however, remains a troubling issue in the American psyche and political landscape. Nothing prevents it from occurring because it is rooted in the makeup of the human nature.

Hence, Racism can occur systemically, as the result of conditions, policies and practices that affect a broad group of people. For instance, the present study that systemic racism can result in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students experiencing poorer outcomes in education, or job applicants without Anglo-Saxon names finding it difficult to gain job interviews. In the most serious form, racism is shown in behaviours and activities that embody race hate, abuse, vilification and violence - exclusively experienced by groups who are visibly various because of their cultural or religious dress, their skin color or their physical figure (Budd Louis, 1962). This disdain the old-fashioned, redneck ideology of white supremacy and black inferiority and instead of espouse support for the ideals of equality in human affairs and Slavery in the United States was the legal institution of human chattel enslavement, primarily of Africans and African Americans, that existed in the United States of America in the 18th and 19th centuries. Slavery had been practiced in British America from early colonial days and was legal in all Thirteen Colonies at the time of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 (Baker, 1969).

Twain, by displaying the duplicity of slavery, indicates how racism distorts the oppressors as much as it does those who are oppressed. The result is a world of moral confusion, in which seemingly good white people such as Miss Watson and Sally Phelps represent no focus about the injustice of slavery or the cruelty of separating Jim from his family.

I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life, and I knew I could pray now. But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking

over our trip down the river, and I see Jim before me all the time: in the day and the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a-floating along, talking and singing and laughing (P. 14,17,8). But somehow, I couldn't seem to strike any places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, 'stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping; and see him how glad he was when I come back out of the fog; and when I come to him again in the swamp, up there where the feud was; and such-like times; and would always call me honey, and pet me and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was; and at last I struck the time I saved him by telling the men we had small-pox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the ONLY one he's got now; and then I happened to look around and see that paper (p. 12,18,19). It was a close place. I took it up and held it in my hand. I was a-trembling because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knower it. I studied a minute, holding my breath, and then say to myself: "All right, then, I'll GO to hell"--and tore it up" (p.6).

Mellow JR. states that Huck's family life, if one can write it one, would be next on the social scale. He came from a background of what difference refers to as poor white trash. The characterization of Pap Finn in the novel is a prime illustration of people from this walk of life. No reference is made to Huck's mother; so, we must suppose she is dead. Pap was as errant a father as one would ever see. He would abandon Huck to fend for himself and be gone as long as a year at a time. (1992)

Slavery was practiced throughout the United States colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries, and African slaves assisted to build the new state into an economic powerhouse through the production of lucrative products like tobacco and cotton. By the mid-19th century, America's westward expansion and the abolition movement provoked a major debate over slavery that would tear the territory apart in the bloody Civil War. Though the Union victory freed the territories' four million slaves, the legacy of slavery continued to influence united state history, from the Reconstruction era to the civil rights movement that emerged a century after emancipation (Leary Lewis, 1962)

Minstrel show was a popular form of entertainment in the 19th- century America. It was a performance performed by white people who were disguised as African Americans. It consisted of scenes, poems, songs, dances that were based partly on black dialect and folklore, partly on Anglo-Saxon American folklore. Even Mark Twain reveled in the minstrel shows, according to his autobiography. In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* it can also perceive a hint concerning minstrel performances. When Joanna Wilks asks about the situation of servants in England Huck answers: "Why, Hare-l- why, Joanna, they never see a holiday from year's end to year's end; never go to the circus, nor theatre, nor nigger indicates, nor nowhere" (p. 171). Huck, of course, knows nothing about the condition in England. However, his manifested implies that nigger shows were really popular at that time. These performances portrayed African Americans as being childish, superstitious, happy and dull, which makes minstrelsy a focus of various heated debates in current criticism. It is no wonder because, to a large extent, the shows had a great impact on society, as they formed a common idea of what African Americans were like. Consequently, the American society embraced the image of a stupid and careless black, who is actually content with being a slave. It should be mentioned that these performances did not form the public opinion only in the South but in North as well. Frederick Douglass points out: "I have often been utterly astonished, since I came to the north, to find persons who could speak of the singing, among slaves, as evidence of their contentment and happiness".

The racist antebellum society simply considered slaves to be an inferior race. The majority of Americans slaves were not even humans. Douglass writes in his autobiography:

We were all ranked together at the valuation. Men and women, old and young, married and single, were ranked with horses, sheep, and swine. There were horses and men, cattle and women, pigs and children, all holding the same rank in the scale of being, and were all subjected to the same narrow examination (p.49).

It happens that slaves were lowered to the same level as animals. Meanwhile, it was believed that slaves were not able to feel any affection, not even parental love. Nevertheless, most of minstrel displays did not capture this. Richard L. Hughes notes in his essay on minstrelsy:

The surviving images and lyrics from the thriving minstrel business reveal demeaning caricatures that reduced African Americans to childish (or inhuman) figures contented with slavery and an opportunity to, according to one song, "Sing for the White Folks, Sing!" Lyrics such as "Oh happy are we Darkies so Gay, Come let us sing and laugh while we play," certainly did not capture the horrors of American slavery (p.29).

So generally speaking it can say that minstrel shows formed a public opinion concerning the character of African Americans, yet they did not show the terrible conditions in which slaves lived, which led to views based on misconception and prejudice. At the meantime, it is quite logical because minstrel shows were not meant only for entertainment, but they also subconsciously advocated slavery. It is hard to imagine that people really believed the supposition that African Americans had no emotions. Therefore, to some extent, minstrelsy actually represents a set of stereotypes in which the society actually wanted to believe, in order to justify the naturalness of slavery. Eric Lott expresses aptly this aspect of minstrelsy:

From our vantage point, the minstrel show indeed seems a transparently racist curiosity, a form of leisure that, in inventing and ridiculing the slow-witted but irrepressible 'plantation darky' and the foppish "northern dandy negro," conveniently rationalized racial oppression (p.15).

It can imagine that for the most of people it was really "convenient" and easier to believe that slaves were like this, rather than question it. It is initially their way of getting rid of guilt. It was as well convenient to believe that slaves have propensity for crime and immorality. As Douglass demonstrates cruelty of slaveholders, he points out: "It is said, a slave has the devil in him, and it must be whipped out" (p. 73). If it takes into consideration the characters from *Huckleberry Finn*, this presupposition becomes strikingly paradoxical because if it traces immoral acts in the novel, they are always related to white people. The best example is the king, the duke, and even Huck. It describes Twain's sense of irony, which is so typical for him.

Given these racial stereotypes, which were deeply rooted in the society at that time, it is no wonder that abolition was not a favorite word and being an abolitionist was not something that somebody should be proud of. Douglass observes: "If a slave ran away and succeeded in getting clear, or if a slave killed his master, set fire to a barn, or did anything very wrong in the mind of a slaveholder, it was spoken of as the fruit of abolition". After Jim admits that he ran off, we can observe Huck's spontaneous disapproval. Consequently, Jim is reluctant to reveal the whole story so Huck encourages him by saying:

Well I did. I said I wouldn't [tell anybody], and I'll stick to it. Honest injun I will. People would call me a low-down Abolitionist and despise me for keeping mum – but that don't make no difference. I am not going to tell, and I ain't a going back there anyways. So now, let's know all about it (p.50).

Evidently, abolitionism was not well received by the society in the South. It is not exaggerated to say that the then society was economically dependent on slave labour and therefore it was in its own interest to maintain slavery. In addition, the slaveholders must have feared possible revenge for their mistreatment of slaves. Briefly, at that time slavery was perceived as being right and natural.

Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory is one of the most influential in psychology. It places great importance on how conflicts among the parts of the mind shape a person's behaviour. Freud states that human behaviour is the consequence of the interactions among three component parts of the mind: the idea, ego, and superego. The theory, also, places a major matter on the role of unconscious psychological conflicts in shaping behavior and personality. Freud views that the mind is composed of two parts: A part is the conscious which includes the things we are aware of; and the unconscious which includes the drives and impulses. This latter is "consisting of instinctual representation, ideas and images originally fixated in a moment of repression." (Wright, 2003. p10)

Psychologically, Huck suffers a persistent conflict. Either he sides the urges of his Id and his own active conscience which stirs the emotions of empathy towards Jim who become snot only a companion but also a

father. Or he listens to his Ego and puts his own convictions aside. He surrenders at last when his Ego sides the Superego against his will, his Id. He respects and favours the society's morals which prohibit aiding a fugitive slave.

I was a trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, between two things, and I knew it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself: 'All right, then, I'll go to hell. (Twain, p.217)

Conclusion

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn of Mark Twain's is a major American satire which is not vindictive, not loaded with invective, and not bitter. His purpose, evidently determined, is made to look ridiculous but the irony is light, and humour is strong. Especially the Protagonist Finn had faced many problems in this society however how Finn has been overcome all the problems in that American society by using his perception. However, this paper has been focused on how the American society has to treat the people those who are came from other countries.

Twain present a combination of affirmative elements (racist language, racial stereotypes, and conciliation) as well as subversive elements (irony, mirror, and model) to their rhetorical audience. The dialectic interaction between "what the text says" and "what the text does" creates a deconstructive tension which endows the texts with a constant suspense. This deconstructive suspense so forcefully absorbs the readers that they do not notice the authors' rhetorical aim - to induce them to inquire into the justice of racial discrimination - which otherwise may offend them because of its propagandistic tendency. In other words, the dialectic - between the racist surface (thesis) and the deconstructive process (antithesis) of the novels - leads the audience to unknowingly perform the role of "ideological critic" of racism (synthesis). The dialectical system attracts to their texts not only Stowe's and Twain's intended audience but also readers in different times and cultures, inducing them to play the role of the ideological critic.

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