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# Analysing Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a Postcolonial Bildungsroman

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**Abstract**
The Paper examines *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a Postcolonial *Bildungsroman*, focusing on growth and development of Huck's identity in the context of nineteenth-century American racial and sociopolitical realities. It contends that Huck's identity formation is influenced by politics, religion, history, race, and language, all of which work together to create and test the moral consciousness of the protagonist. The changing relationship of *Bildung* with Jim highlights the conflict between a person's ethical awareness and socially ingrained prejudice. Mark Twain's use of colloquial language challenges prevailing moral; and cultural norms, which further solidifies this shift. The analysis comes to the conclusion that in a postcolonial setting, Huck's growth represents a convoluted, unfinished quest for selfhood.

**Keywords:** Growth and development, sociopolitical realities, consciousness, postcolonial *bildungsroman*, selfhood

## Introduction

The *Bildungsroman* genre satisfies the goals of postcolonial writers, who want to document the effects of colonization on the process of growing up while also critically examining colonial relationships, opposing imperialist worldviews, and decolonizing the language and culture. To contribute to the decolonization of the cultures and societies of postcolonial nations, postcolonial literature tries to depict and express the ramifications and impacts of colonialism. Unlike the European colonizer, the postcolonial writer has a different perspective regarding their country and society. The genre, postcolonial novelists have consistently used is the *Bildungsroman*. Feroza Jussawalla, in her "Kim, Huck, and Naipaul: Using the Postcolonial Bildungsroman to (Re) define Postcoloniality" (1997) [23], affirms that the *Bildungsroman*'s success in postcolonial literature can be attributed to the genre's ability to depict the individual's connection with a changing society and developing nations. R.W.B. Lewis, in his *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (1955) [25], explains the efforts of Americans: "The American myth saw life and history as just beginning. It described the world as starting up again under fresh initiative, in a divinely granted second chance for the human race after the first chance had been so disastrously fumbled in the darkening Old World. It introduced a new kind of hero …" (5). This was the hero who would illustrate "our national birth" and characterize America's "separation from Europe" (5). Mark Twain can be called a postcolonial, particularly because he wrote as an American and asserted his Americanness, as well as America's independence from Britain, making him the first postcolonial writer. Other than contextualizing works in historical instances of postcoloniality or extending metaphorical analyses of race, class, and politics as defining postcoloniality, no one has been able to identify the qualities of postcolonial literature thus far. Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) shows a development of selfhood, Americanism, and the will to break away from the British Empire. Kwame Anthony Appiah, in his "The Illusions of Race" (2006) [14], mentions W. E. B. Du Bois declared that "if this be true, the history of the world is the history, not of individuals, but of groups, not nations, but of races" (224). David L. Smith, in his "Huck, Jim, and American Racial Discourse" (2004) [32], defines "Race" as a scheme for demoting a section of the people to a permanent subservient status. It acts by claiming that every "race" has distinct, decisive, inherent behavioral tendencies and capabilities that differentiate it from other races. In the case of America, race has been used against large numbers of people, for instance, Asians, Native Americans, Jews, and even, for a short period, a miscellaneous collection of European migrants. The foremost priority historically has been on delineating "the Negro" as an eccentric from Euro-American standards. "Race" in America connotes white dominance and black subservience, and "the Negro", a socially constructed literature, is a generalized, one-dimensional representative of the historical truth of Afro-Americans.

Louis Althusser, in his *For Marx* (1979) [1], declares that economically, the trade of slaves, agriculture debt slavery or peonage, chattel slavery, and unequal wages based on color have made the enslavement of Afro-Americans the most remunerative form of racism. Ultimately, African Americans have long been the greatest American "minority" group. Slavery has its roots in prehistoric times and began in America when white settlers needed cheap labor for their plantations. To meet this need, large numbers of Africans were transported to America, later known as African Americans. Stuart Berg Flexner, in his *I Hear American Talking* (1976) [13], states that "Negro" was usually enunciated as "nigger" till nearly 1825; at that time, abolitionists started condemning that word. They tend to choose "person of color" or "colored person" (57). As a consequence, W. E. B. Du Bois in his "The Souls of Black Folk" (1965) [11] reports that a few black abolitionists at the onset of the 1830s announced themselves unified "as men, not as slaves; as 'people of color', not as 'Negroes'" (245). Inscribing ages later in *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (1900), Thomas Wentworth Higginson censured the general use of "nigger" amongst freedmen, which he considered a sign of inferior self-respect (28). The objections to "nigger", then, are not an effect of modern sensibility, even though it had been prevalent for a half-century before *Huckleberry Finn* was published. "Nigger" is an abusive jargon time for

black human beings; taken from the Spanish term negro. The word "nigger" in the text forms a context against which Jim's definite morality may develop as a categorical denial of the racist premise.

Twain's historical position during the post-Reconstruction era of industrial expansion, he possesses historical knowledge that challenges the popular, oversimplified notion of escaping to the wilderness, which is relevant to both his own time and the time of the young Huck Finn. The other historical reason that undermines the prospect of a westward escape is related to Huck's role as narrator, or what Henry Wonham in his "The Disembodied Yarnspinner and the Reader of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (1991) [40] refers to as Twain's "transfer of narrative responsibility" (9). To simply collapse the gap between Twain and the elder Huck, who serves as narrator, ignores the character's power to influence the story. Slavery was a major problem in the United States throughout the 1840s, especially in the Middle West. The novel depicts Missouri, the author's hometown, as a slave state. Furthermore, the issue hasn't been fully fixed yet. As a result, the book is more than just nostalgic; it is Janus-faced, looking at the past and the future. The following passage is an example of it;

Pretty soon I wanted to smoke, and asked the widow to let me. But she wouldn't. She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must try to not do it any more. That is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it. Here she was a bothering about Moses, which was no kin to her, and no use to anybody … (Huck, 18-19).

The narrative flows because of the unselfconscious care with which it shifts from the past to the present and back again. As historian Kenneth M. Stampp elucidates in his *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (1956) [33], throughout the time Huck and Jim lived, white Americans mostly kept black people under control through slavery and the practice of making slaves "stand in fear". Rhett S. Jones, in his "Nigger and Knowledge: White Double-Consciousness in A*dventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (1984) [21], expounds on the levels of racist dominance at work during the time of the novel's formation:

The maltreatment of blacks … was publicly endorsed by every major institution in the nation as the churches found biblical justifications for it, the courts repeatedly ruled that African Americans were not entitled to the protection of the constitution, and businesses refused to employ blacks in any but the most menial capacities. Before Twain died, the newly emergent social sciences devised a number of ways to prove the inferiority of black folk. (29)

Hywel Dix, in his "Mark Twain: Freedom, Imperialism and Selective Tradition" (2005) [9], claimed that since Mark Twain was a pen name and a mask that gained some political significance, nearly every public appearance by the author involved some sort of concealment. Jonathan Arac, in his "Nationalism, Hypercanonization, and *Huckleberry Finn*" (1992) [2], explicated that the text was canonized precisely because it maintained the dominant cultures'-imposed myth of the individual's free will. In the middle of the public rhetoric of tolerated racism, which was seen in southern newspapers and the statements of politicians who supported white supremacist ideology, Twain presented a fictitious character in the form of a runaway slave who represented humanity. It is shown that the dichotomy commonly frames the individual/society dilemma as an easy task of moving away from the center to obtain complete liberty, which is far more nuanced than the popular discourses allow. Huck expresses contentment and delight in feeling "free and easy", in those rare moments with Jim, away from the alienation and loneliness that finally seep in and overpower him. Twain gives the reader a peek into a system that questions socially and politically reified notions regarding race as well.

The Civil War historian, Stephen B. Oates, in his *Our Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln, John Brown, and the Civil War* (1979) [29], defines Illinois in Twain's novel as "racist to the core" (66). James Tackach in his "Why Jim Does not Escape to Illinois in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (2004) [35] explains that during the 1840s, Illinois refused to acknowledge Afro-Americans' citizenship; "they could not vote, run for public office, attend public schools, own property, file a lawsuit, testify against white people in court, or join the state militia" (218). Malcolm Lowance, in his *Against Slavery: An Abolitionist Reader* (2000) [27], suggested that the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 stipulates that the person "who shall harbor or conceal" a runaway slave "after notice that he or she was fugitive from labor" shall "forfeit and pay the sum of five hundred dollars" (32). Jim would have been returned to Miss Watson if both had been caught by Illinois slave catchers, and Huck may have faced an arrest and fine for hiding and harboring a runaway slave. Huck is well aware of the anxiety black Missourians had about being sold down the river since they thought slavery was harsher the further south one traveled. Huck responds, "Goodness sakes, would a runaway nigger run *south*?" to the Duke and the King when they ask he later on about Jim's potential to be a runaway slave (Huck, 167). The two scalawags are satisfied with the response since they, too, are aware of the widespread white knowledge of border state blacks' terror of the Deep South. Jim's reasoning for not going to Illinois is best explained by Thomas Cooley in a footnote found in Chapter 8 of the third edition of the Norton Critical *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1999) [6],

Huck earlier locates Jackson's Island only a quarter of a mile from the Illinois shore. What is to prevent Jim from crossing that short space to free soil? Illinois, and especially southern Illinois, where kidnapping and slave-catching were a thriving business, enforced the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793; thus Jim, without freedom papers, would be subject to arrest and indentured labor until claimed by his "owner". By going downriver to Cairo and then northeast up the Ohio, Jim might also have been safer because Ohio had a far more extensive Underground Railroad than any other state. (56)

Rhett S. Jones, in his "Proving Blacks Inferior, 1870-1930[22]" (1971), declares that racism in the nineteenth century started with enslavement and continued under Jim Crow laws. Slave owners accepted the humanity of black individuals in their everyday communication with their black property, but in public, they denied that African Americans were humans. Huck does not own slaves, but he sometimes questions the system that gave legitimacy to slavery. Nonetheless, he knows Jim and recognizes that Jim does not match the stereotypical caricature of the uneducated darky. Huck drifts uneasily between the two layers of white double consciousness as the raft travels downriver. Jim has changed from being a nigger to a person. Whites had a conflicting thought that black people couldn't plot attacks against them, but what David Walker called a

"secret monitor" alerted them to black cooperation as well as opposition. Huck gets a peek at this Afro-American association through Jim. Following Jim and Huck's separation, Huck moves in with the Grangerfords for the time being. Jack, a slave owned by the Grangerfords, directs Huck to Jim's hiding place. Jim tells how he waited for the chance to speak with Huck by hiding in the woods: "Early in de mawnin' some er de niggers come along, gwyne to de fields, en dey tuk me en showed me dis place, whah de dogs can't track me on accounts o' de water, en dey brings me truck to eat every night, en tells me how you's a gitt'n along" (Huck 151). Huck demonstrates that white people fully recognized that just as white people cooperated to perpetuate slavery, so too did black people fight against it. Huck expresses no astonishment that slaves would help a runaway slave. Ultimately, Huck's awareness of black people's humanity has been constructed by white double consciousness, which has helped him recognize that black people are not the mindless automatons that society portrays them as. Huck, like the majority of Euro-Americans of that era, wants to think that the runaway slave recognizes the superiority of white people. Tom's intricate plan for Jim's rescue from the Phelps cabin, "Jim he couldn't see no sense in the most of it, but he allowed we was white folks and knowed better than him; so he was satisfied, and said he would do it all just as Tom said" (Huck 313). The two components, considered together, were the perception that blacks liked whites and the opinion that blacks embraced the notion that whites were superior. For instance, the direct connection between racial and political alienation and economic and political alienation can be found in the 1740 South Carolina law that aimed to make it nearly impossible for Afro-American slaves to learn, much less master, literacy:

And *whereas* the having of slaves taught to write, or suffering them to be employed in writing, may be attending with great inconveniences; Be it *enacted*, that all and every person and persons whatsoever, who shall hereafter teach, or cause any slave or slaves to be taught to write, or shall use or employ any slave as a scribe in any manner of writing whatsoever, hereafter taught to write; every such person or persons shall, for every offense, forfeit the sum of one hundred pounds current money. (217)

Back then, learning to read and write was not only challenging, but it was also against the law. As a direct response to the gravely severe accusations about their "nature", black people penned books, poems, and autobiographical stories. The most common types of writing were philosophical and political discourses. In the early 1800s, African American literature was published in numerous forms. Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) is one of the slave tales that white abolitionists promoted in writing and publication. In prison, Nat Turner, the leader of a slave revolt in 1831, wrote a memoir titled *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1967) [34]. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, written by him in 1845, was an autobiography. The first African American drama was William Bell Brown's *The Escape or a Leap for Freedom* (1858). The first African American novel published in America was *Our Nig: or, Sketches from the Life of a Free Black* by Harriet E. Wilson in 1859. Henry Louis Gates in his "Writing Race" (2006) [14] states that black writers who responded to the challenge of the dominant white Western culture wrote as though their lives depended on it. And strangely, they did, since their writing became known as the "life of the race" in Western discourse (218).

Sun Haiyang and Li Fenrong in their "Mississippi River in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (2003) [15] assert that after several acquaintances with these "civilized" white individuals, Huck discovered that "whether a man is ugly or good, despicable or noble is not judged by his language…" (109). Another notable aspect of the novel is its creative use of dialect by the semi-literate fourteen-year-old Huck, who serves as the novel's central consciousness. Jim shows remarkable rational capabilities, in spite of his factual obliviousness. For example, in their debate over "Poly-voo-frenzy", Huck makes a classification mistake by suggesting that the contrast between dialects is comparable to the distinction between human language and feline language. While Jim's reaction – that a man must talk like a man – deceives his obliviousness to cultural diversity, his debate is generally discerning and fundamentally sound. The humor in Huck's decision, "you can't learn a nigger to argue", emerges definitively that Jim's debate is better than Huck's (Huck 114). Huck is remarkably malleable, regardless of any assertions about his inherent identity. Ernest Hemingway, in his *Green Hills of Africa* (1935) [16], observed, "did not use the words that people always have used in speech, the words that survive in language" (21). David Carkeet, in his "The Dialects in *Huckleberry Finn*" (2004) [5], asserts that it is not the case that there are merely seven different dialects in the novel; it is the case that there are seven different dialects that Samuel Clemens had in his brain when he wrote "Explanatory". These are in this manner:

**Missouri Negro:** Jim (and four other minor characters)
**Southwestern:** Arkansas Gossips (Sister Hotchkiss *et al*.)
**Ordinary "Pike Country":** Huck, Tom, Aunty Polly, Ben Rogers, Pap, Judith Loftus
**Modified "Pike Country":** Thieves on the *Sir Walter Scott*
**Modified "Pike Country":** King
**Modified "Pike Country":** Bricksville Loafers
**Modified "Pike Country":** Aunt Sally and Uncle Silas Phelps (319)

In the final statement of the "Explanatory", the author declares that "I make this explanation for the reason that without it many readers would suppose that all these characters were trying to talk alike and not succeeding" (v). However, there is an immense difference between what is proclaimed in the "Explanatory" concerning the number of identifiable dialects. The variations of the "Pike Country" dialect, where the distinction is certainly excellent; herein it is notable that the speakers of three of the four modified variations of the "Pike Country" dialect-the thieves on *Sir Walter Scott*, the King, and the Bricksville Loafers- are virtuously despicable, and, along with that their speech varies from Huck by the morality of attributes generally noticed in the speech of the slaves in *Huckleberry Finn*. For instance, the Bricksvelle Loafers *gwyne* takes place solely in the speech of blacks. Similarly, this can be stated for the King's palatalization, which in the document is granted to the thieves on *Sir Walter Scott*. This final syndicate also drops *r* in phonetic domains like those where *r* is missing in Jim's speech (*befo', yo'*), but Huck hardly drops *r* and not once loses it word-ultimately (e.g., *stabboard, whippo-will*). An individual initially believed that Twain, in the text, was

bothered by revealing fragilities in the stereotypical standards of society, calls upon those standards in the way he contaminates these characters' dialects – to "lower" them, he represents them with characteristics of black speech; however, in drawing this, Twain was only disclosing linguistic reality in his period. In the novel, "*gwyne*, palatalization, and *r*-lessness are – for both blacks and whites – physical signals of low social status, and – for whites only – physical signals of "substandard" morals" (320). These white characters can share the phenomenon of Jim's dialect, yet they do not share in his righteousness.

The spoken idiom is employed in the novel, and it can be seen in the opening paragraph of the text. Huck's narrative differs from various other first-person narratives because it is written in an oral style. However, it's vital to remember that Huck, the narrator, acknowledges the existence of the reader or audience. "You" is used a lot throughout the text as evidence of this and when Huck is portraying Col. Grangerford in chapter 18, he makes similar use of the pronoun "you": "His hands was long and thin, and every day of his life he put on a clean shirt and full suit from head to foot made out of linen so white it hurt your eyes to look at it; … He was as kind as he could be – You could feel that, you know, and so you had confidence" (Huck 143-144). Walter J. Ong in his *Orality and Literacy* (1982) [30] affirms that Huck's Language has a distinctive oral style that may be identified by the frequent addition of "and", "and then", and other run-on statements – a technique known as the additive oral style:

The widow she cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and she called me a lot of other names, too, but she never meant no harm by it. She put me in them new clothes again, and I couldn't do nothing but sweat and sweat, and feel all cramped up. Well, then, the old thing commenced again. The widow rung a bell for supper, and you had to come to time. (Huck 18)

The conversational dialect employed here contributes to the desired effect of purity, simplicity, and naivete, which contrasts sharply with the trickster's inflated language throughout the narrative. The change from spoken to dramatic presentation is also facilitated by Huck's use of spoken idioms in his narration. Mark Twain maintains the tone of the spoken phrase in the entire text that concludes with Huck Finn signing off as yours sincerely in the style of a letter to the readers. Twain contrived the novel in the zenith of literary dialect in the literature of America, and surely, he intended to present what he too was able to do, particularly with the "Pike Country" dialect that he helped to generate. Undeniably, in the contemporary era, the speech of lower-class countryside whites in the South shares to a great extent with the speech of blacks. Huckleberry Finn is referred to as "the First Nigger Novel" by novelist David Bradley, the author of *The Chaneyville Incident* (1981) [3]. Bradley believes that this book foreshadowed the fiction of African American writers in the twentieth century. Bernard de Voto, in his *The Portable Mark Twain* (1973) [38], inscribes the writings of Twain:

Mark Twain wrote one of the great styles of American literature, he developed the modern American style, he was the first writer who ever used the American vernacular at the level of art… Huck's style, which is the spoken language of the untutored American of his place and time, differentiates the most subtle meanings and emphases and proves capable of the most difficult psychological effects. In a single step it made a literary medium of the American language; the liberating effect on American writing could hardly be overstated. Since Huckleberry Finn the well of American undefiled has flowed confidently. (26-28)

Yinxiu Ji in his "An Analysis of the Multi-roles the Mississippi River Plays in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (2018) [20] affirms that Mark Twain grew up in Hannibal, which was located near the Mississippi River, since he was four years old. The river was a God to young Twain, with incredible power, mystery, and dominance. On the other hand, Huck views the Mississippi River as an omnipotent God representing the secrets of rebirth and life. The river has taken care of Huck and Jim like a mother does for her children. While it has punished robbers and devils. The river has a significant impact on their spiritual lives, inspiring them to pursue their goals and find spiritual comfort and liberation. Huck found heaven on the Mississippi River, "I laid there, and had a good rest and a smoke out of my pipe, looking away into the sky; not a cloud in it. The sky looks ever so deep when you lay down on your back in the moonshine; I never knowed it before…we ain't going nowhere but here", he said (Huck 59). The novel's surface meaning is Huck's first rebirth, which represents physical and mental freedom. It is the fundamental idea that Huck developed spiritually, "from naive innocence to maturity, from the blind worship to the discovery of self and identity of self" (21). When a freighter knocks over their raft, Huck experiences his second rebirth. The novel's turning point is survival, which also catalyzes Huck's sublime. Before this adventurous journey, Huck had never considered Jim as a friend. But following his second rebirth, Huck came to understand the filthy, deceptive, and evil upper class as well as the so-called civilized world. This rebirth was spiritual baptism by the Mississippi River, which erased racial prejudice from his bones and guided him toward a path of defiance against the adult world. Huck is forced to justify his generosity toward Jim as the product of culturally acquired depravity, allowing him to portray himself as a criminal because his intellect and ideals are never truly freed from St. Petersburg's dominance. It is precisely this unresolved conflict between "a sound heart and a deformed conscience" that permits Twain to pursue his goal of decentering the autonomous subject in America (30). Huck is torn throughout the novel between his growing sentiments for Jim, like a black man, and his preconceived notions of black people, which leads him to perpetuate racial prejudice in society frequently:

And then think of *me*! It would get all around, that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I was ever to see anybody from that town again, I'd be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame. (Huck 269)

This final quote comes right before Huck decides to "go to hell" for Jim. A declaration demonstrates that Huck's conscience and consciousness are still at the center. As Michel J. Hoffman in his "Huck's Ironic Circle" (1986) [18] elucidates it: "[Huck] decides … to opt for the life of the 'criminal', at least in the eyes of his society – whose values he does not reject" (39). Jim is used to help Huck's socialized consciousness and teach him that an individual's deeds, not the color of his skin, should determine how they are perceived. The term "moral" was practically equivalent to "religious" in America from the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Although Huck first accepts the existing idea that morality and religion are synonyms, Twain exposes the

fallacy of this idea by ironically inverting intuitive morality in light of the events that transpire throughout the novel. Through Huck's cognitive process, Twain implies that morality can be attained independently of religion. Twain initially demonstrates Huck's misunderstanding by having him confuse religious chastity with moral propriety. Driven by his aspiration to "be better", Huck chooses to "kneel down", suggesting that becoming more pious is the path to becoming a moral person. "All right, then, I'll *go* to hell" – and tore it up. (Huck 271-272). The concern here is not merely whether or not Huck should return a runaway slave to Miss. Watson. Essentially, Huck ought to choose whether to believe the traditional knowledge that describes "Negroes" as inhuman objects, or the traces of his own experience that have proven Jim to be a virtuous and sympathetic individual and a faithful friend. Huck's choice delineates a liberal decision of morals above social convention. Twain categorically makes Huck's decision a sharp attack on the Southern church. Huck rebukes himself: "There was the Sunday school, you could a gone to it; and if you'd a done it, they'd a learnt you, there, that people that acts as I'd been acting about that nigger goes to everlasting fire" (Huck 270). But regardless of Huck's agitation, he surpasses the moral constraints of his time and place. Because the pre-Civil War Southern church imparted that Slavery was God's desire, Huck's choice entirely rejects the church's training about slavery. Indirectly, it also rejects the church as an institution by implying that the church works to sabotage, not to strengthen, a belief in one's morality. To describe "Negroes" as inhuman eliminates them from moral attention and hence vindicates their ruthless enslavement. Twain shows how Huck must completely give up his religious status to make the truly moral and compassionate choice not to betray Jim. He may affirm his opinion that religion is merely one of many paths to realistic morality, although an ill-considered one. The process by which Huck develops moral maturity is referred to by Daniel W. Cox in *Encyclopedia of Human Development* (2006) [7] as the "interplay between morality and sense making, conscience and cognition" (157). Huck's inner journey reveals the novel's moral concerns. Gregg Crane, in his *The Cambridge Introduction to the Nineteenth-Century American Novel* (2007) [8], describes that;

The pivotal crisis of the realist text often involves a test of the protagonist's moral agency. Unlike the naturalist, the realist presumes that all people, including those in straitened circumstances, are endowed to some extent with moral agency. The realist focuses on the process of deliberation brought on by moments of crisis: Huck Finn's decision to "go to hell" so that Jim can go free. (162)

Yujin Li, in her "The Identity of Jim in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* from the Postcolonial Perspective" (2018) [26], explains that Huck's perception of Jim is "a journey of realization, a journey of learning, and a journey of life" (538). P. Kiruthika in her "An Analysis of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Based on the Cosmogonic Cycle" (2017) [24] illustrates that Huck makes his final choice based on his ethical values rather than socially acceptable morality. In the end, Huck overcomes racism and prejudice and develops into a wise individual. Huck remarks to himself, "It was like being born again, I was so glad to find who I was", he almost understands the significance of his voyage (Huck 282).

Yanxia Sang in her "An Analysis of the Factors Affecting Huck's Growth" (2010) [31] affirms that Huck's growth is not achieved in one move although it develops steadily. A white lad who is raised in a country where the slaveholding system was a matter of course, he is shaped by the societal viewpoint of racial discrimination and prejudice. Huck distinguishes himself from Jim as being fundamentally supreme due to his race. Taking into consideration arguments on the subjects of culture, language, and royalty when Huck shows himself as being intelligent as compared to Jim, best epitomized by his remark on Jim's rational capability: "I see it warn't no use wasting words – you can't learn a nigger to argue" (Huck 114). Twain challenges this viewpoint by having Jim provide a stronger syllogism, yet Huck is still forced to occupy the racist's discursive space. The unique environment in which Huck was raised – a slave state – persistently shapes his thoughts and beliefs. David L Smith (2004) [32] expounds that Mark Twain implemented an approach of sabotage in his attack on race. He employs the word "nigger", and exhibits Jim engaging in superstitious actions.In a nutshell, Jim shows all the traits that "the Negro" apparently lacks. Twain's conclusions only subvert the reasonings of slavery that were already long from the time when it was abolished or obliterated. Huck and Jim were granted the unending ability to pursue freedom and ideals by the magical Mississippi River, which separated them from the false and harsh reality of society. At the beginning of the novel, when Huck tells Jim he will not sell him, at that moment he is demonstrating his willingness to face the upcoming problems.

"But mind, you said you wouldn' tell – you know you said you wouldn' tell, Huck."

"Well, I did. I said I wouldn't, and I'll stick to it. Honest *injun*, I will. People would call me a low down Ablitionist and despise me for keeping mum – but that don't make no difference. I ain't agoing to tell, and I ain't agoing back there, anyways. So now, le's know all about it". (Huck 69)

Li Yuan and Guo Lei in their "The Return of Discourse Power: The Post Colonialism in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (2009) [41] demonstrated that Huck insisted on upholding the norms of his community because he could not allow the right to speech to slip into black hands (75-76). Afro-Americans were the property of white people throughout the enslavement system. They are not only incapable of having the same social position as White people, but they are also not considered human beings. Undoubtedly, the feudal consciousness of colonialism is profoundly ingrained in the hearts of individuals. Black people's identities influenced Huck's behavior as well as his perception of the world. Huck's perspective does not come to an end until the phase when both of them see each other after the fog. Huck is educated by Jim's response and brings himself to ask for forgiveness from Jim: "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger – but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterwards, neither" (Huck 121). This is the turning point of his approach concerning the slaves, and the beginning of his escape from the conventions and prejudice. In addition, the "Nigger" Jim has played a vital role on the road of Huck's growth and development. Rhett S. Jones (1984) [21] illustrated that both drifters rely on each other; Jim requires Huck's white identity and his deftness when telling lies, and Huck needs Jim's unwavering belief in his abilities and understanding of human nature. Huck pretends to fall asleep while observing and listening to Jim, who has left his wife

and his children Johnny and Elizabeth, behind due to his flight. Huck expresses:

I do believe he cared just as much for his people as white folks does for their'n. It don't seem natural, but I reckon it's so. He was often moaning and mourning that way, nights, when he judged I was asleep, and saying, "Po' little 'Lizabeth! po' little Johnny! it's mighty hard; I spec' I ain't ever gwyne to see you no mo', no mo'!" He was a mighty good nigger, Jim was. (Huck 201)

Jim's human attributes are also acknowledged by Huck: "I had the middle watch, you know, but I was pretty sleepy by that time, so Jim said he would stand the first half of it for me; he was always mighty good that way, Jim was" (Huck 169). And, "I went to sleep, and Jim didn't call me when it was my turn. He often done that" (Huck 201). It is impossible to envision Pap taking care to ensure his kid gets enough sleep but Huck shows no signs of considering this as a responsibility of an adult to allow a growing kid to sleep. "It was according to the old saying, 'give a nigger an inch and he'll take an ell.' … Here was this nigger which I had as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children – children that belonged to a man I didn't even know; a man that hadn't ever done me no harm" (Huck 124). The difference between the traditional worldview expressed by the innocent Huck and Twain's humanistic stance conveyed here is a striking indictment of a prejudiced society that destroys even young minds. T. S. Eliot in his "Introduction to *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" (2004) [12] explicates that Huck is the passive viewer of men and events, Jim is the submissive victim of them, and they are equivalent in dignity.

Twain uses "nigger" in the novel as a counterpart for "slave" and this corresponds to one practice shared throughout the antebellum era. "Miss Watson's big nigger, named Jim" (Huck 5), and the word "nigger-stealer", evidently entitles the "nigger" as an object of property: a product, a slave. It also portrays the general critical habit of calling Jim "Nigger Jim", as if "nigger" were a part of his designation. In this case, "nigger" signifies a subservient, even inhuman, brute who is properly owned by and submissive to Euro-Americans. Mark Twain in his *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1983) [36] puts Hank Morgan's rumination on the supremacy of culture: "Training-training is everything; a person. We speak of nature; thing as nature; training is all there is to it is folly; there is no such what we call by that misleading name is merely heredity and training. We have no thoughts of our own, no opinions of our own: they are transmitted to us, trained into us" (162). Hoffman (1986) [18] rejects Leo Marx's expulsion of the ending to segregate Huck's failed individuality from Twain's assumed "failure of vision", suggesting rather that it denotes an idea "that the forces of society are stronger than the individual's will" (39). The final line of the novel makes fun of Huck's naive faith that he is capable of breaking the structures of society that have provided him his sense of self and his identity, even though Huck is ultimately just as enslaved as Jim. This is because he still views himself as an agent free from these constraints. Hoffman (1986) [18] also uncovers the purpose of this deception: "It is important that the reader be deceived, so that what happens to Huck later on will shock him into seeing that the problem posed in the book are unresolvable either in fiction or in life" (31-32). Rhett S. Jones (1984) [21] explains that Twain has portrayed Huck as a boy rather than a man, even though he is on the verge of realizing Jim's humanity and his reliance on Jim, Twain allows his young protagonist to reveal the reality of black-white relations. T. S. Eliot (2004) [12] explains Huck is non-resistant and aloof, evidently always the sufferer of circumstances; and despite that, "in his acceptance of his world and of what it does to him and others, he is more powerful than his world, because he is more *aware* than any other person in it" (350).

**Conclusion**

The story of an adolescent's development is told in the novel. Like every adolescent, Huck faces several dilemmas and problems. He sees the passion, dishonesty, brutality, and antiquated customs when he enters the world of adulthood. He sometimes feels lost in the complexities of good and evil, sometimes even losing his path to development. Owing to his naivety, he is susceptible to external influences, including people and his surroundings. In the meanwhile, as a person, he is extremely independent. He starts to have his thoughts and Independent thought is a crucial indicator of maturity and development. Huck's development is influenced by all variables, internal and external, but his sound heart, being the internal factor, is what ultimately determines his development. Huck's moral sense develops, leading to a more inclusive and less egoistic societal perspective. The morally correct choice is the one that is compatible with his friendship with Jim. This wider perspective of society becomes possible by acquiring the capability to take on the position of others – to distinguish the self from one's desires. Through his moral conflict with society, Huck seeks to define himself and find meaning in life. Huck acknowledges that he cannot completely break away from civilization and comes to terms with becoming civilized – something he had initially opposed.

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