



# Facets Of Servility: Mark Twain's The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer And The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn

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## Abstract

The aim of this paper is to highlight the facets of servility in Mark Twain's novels - **The Adventures of Tom Sawyer** and **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**. In his novels Twain has thrown light on the nature and character of the actor and has described the reflections of servility which are related to the social conditions namely discrimination, violence, fraud, and prejudice. As a result of the world, such types of reflections are founded in the society that are experienced by the characters - Huck and Jim.

Servility is a black spot on American society. It should completely be uprooted.

**Keywords:** Novel, chattel servility, freedom, adventures, fraud, violence, racism hypocrisy and so-on

## Introduction

Servility is an important aspect of Mark Twain's novels **The adventure of Tom Sawyer** and **The adventure of Huckleberry Finn**.

Mark Twain's novels are based on servility, racism, freedom and hypocrisy. He shows through his novels that in America, white people treated black people like animals. They did not consider them as human at all. Rather, whenever there was need, they bought or sold them just like commodities. However, voices started rising against servility and some laws were also passed - If the owner frees the slaves from servility, he will be freed. For example: Miss Watson had freed her slave Jim in her will. Twain says that supporting servility is a big crime. In the novel of Tom Sawyer, both Huck and Tom had bad thoughts about black. Although they were children, influenced of thinking old people. Huck used to call niggers while Tom used to call them lying people. such as :

"I never see a nigger that wouldn't lie".

(Tom Sawyer, p.53)

Huck, who is a child, has slaves to take care of him but he lives and eats with black people. such as:

"I tote water for Uncle Jack whenever  
 he wants me to, and any time I ask  
 him he gives me a little something to  
 eat if he can spare it. That's a mighty  
 good niggers, Tom. He likes me becuz I  
 don't ever act as if I was above him.

Sometimes I've set right down and eat  
with him. But you needn't tell that. A  
body's got to do things when he's  
awful hungry he wouldn't want to do  
as a steady thing". (The Greatest  
Novels of Mark Twain, p.147)

In the adventures of Huckleberry Finn, there is a character named Jim whose character is very similar to Huck but has not been studied properly by critics. T.S. Eliot's mention in his introduction, such as:

"Jim is as notable a character as  
Huck". (T.S. Eliot, Introduction, p.26)

These show that servility and the status of slaves in American society at that time.

Nigger people are servility especially in the eyes of the White people. The white people do not treat the Nigger people in the village well and consider them fools. They cheated their slaves and made them foolish by telling stories of all the Nigger. Such as:

"Niggers would come miles to hear  
Jim tell about it, and he was more  
looked up to than any nigger in that  
to than any nigger in that country".  
(Huckleberry Finn, p.15)

In the novel some characters consider slaves as their personal property. He used him in his own way. If the slave ran away, they kept some people to catch him. Miss Watson plans to sell Jim to the riverside, such as:

"I hear old missus tell de widder she  
gwyne to sell me down to Orleans  
but she didn't want to, but she could  
git eight hund'd dollars for me".  
(Huckleberry Finn, p.55)

One night Pap got drunk and talked very sadly. Now the government has started doing such low things that it is giving the right to vote to black people also. Although he can speak many languages. This was the worst thing for a black man to vote in his city. Such as:

"but when they told me there was a  
State in this country were they'd let  
that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says  
I'll never vote agin Them's the very  
words I said; they all heard me; and  
the country may rot for all me".  
(Huckleberry Finn, p.38)

This statement by Pap shows that he was a racist person. Twain wanted to show that racism was so deep in the white people that a drunken white person could vote but an educated black man could not. Racism is also revealed in this incident that one day when Aunt Shelly asks Huck anyone is hurt, he replies

"No'm, killed a nigger".  
(Huckleberry Finn, p.459)

Then Aunt Shelly says

"Well, it's lucky because sometimes  
people do get hurt."  
(Huckleberry Finn, p.459)

This shows that even the death of slaves had no value.

In this novel, chattel servility is one of the major types of servility. Slaves were brought by their owners by bargaining them like goods. They had different owners who used to fix its price according to their own wishes. Such as

“A couple of nigger traders come along, and the king sold them the niggers reasonable, for three -day drafts as they called it, and away they went, the two sons up the river to Memphis, and their mother down the river to Orleans”.

(Huckleberry Finn, p.415)

These lines show that a swindler king seduced the daughters of Mr. Peter after his death and convinced them to sell all their inheritance, the house and Mr. Peter's slaves. When she agreed, the king immediately announced the sale after two days. Along with all the property of Mr. Peter, all his slaves were also sold to another owner. In this way, the families of the black people were sold to different masters due to which they had to live away from their families. In this situation, the son went to Memphis and the mother went to Orleans. This fact shows that chattel servility was also done with slaves.

Servility has received the most attention in Mark Twain's novels. Huck is the son of a white family. He was also raised in a family that supported racism but Huck is upset when he learns Jim has a family. He is living away from his wife and children because of servility. At the beginning, it is shown that he is hesitant to help Jim because of the discrimination prevailing in the society. Then his thinking changed and he decided to help Jim. However, Huck had a lot of negative feelings towards slaves due to his upbringing which made it difficult for him to get rid of them. Then he reads a letter from Miss Watson which writes to the owner of Jim. Such as:

“I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life and I knowed I could pray now”. (Huckleberry Finn, p.450)

Huck gets confused in this situation whether he should hand over the slaves to Miss Watson and follow the rules of white people in the society or help slaves Jim. He challenges the social convention of that time.

Freedom is the second most important aspect of the novel. Jim is a slave, his only desire in this novel is to get freedom from servility. He knew that until he gets freedom from this servility, he cannot live in freedom with his family. Such as:

“Jim won't ever forgit you, Huck; you's de bes' fren' Jim's ever had; en you's de only fren' ole Jim got now”.

(Huckleberry Finn, P.p.105-106)

When Jim goes to the independent State, he calls Huck his best friend and says that he will never forget his help. Through this novel, Twain criticizes those who supported servility. He makes children and women his slaves and so does his masters.

In the early part of the novel, Pap was Huck's father who mistreated Huck, who was also a drunkard. Judge is given an order to take him into custody due to his bad behavior. Such as:

“it was a new judge that had just come, and he didn't know the old man; so he said courts mustn't interfere and separate families if they could help it; said he druther not take a child away from its father”

(Huckleberry Finn, P.p.216-217)

In this novel, Pap, a drunkard, beats his son Huck. Huck thinks that he would be saved from such troubles in the Jungle rather than at home. The Judge who sent Pap to custody because of his bad behavior. Both Judge Thatcher and The Widow try to ensure that Huck lives a good life in society. Here Twain is trying to show that the way Jim is treated by his masters, in the same way his father beats Huck to get money.

Such as:

“Every little while he locked me in and went down to the store,three miles,to the ferry,and traded fish and game for whisky”.(Huckleberry Finn,P.p.34-35)

Twain explains that just as Jim tries his best to escape from his masters, Thatcher and Widow try their best to save Huck from his father.

In the beginning of the novel,Twain describes the atrocities committed by white people.When Huck tried to become educated,his father stopped him,made fun of him and beat him up and took him money.such as:

“ You’re educated,too, they say-can read and write.You think you’re better’n your father, now don't you, because he can't ? I'll take it out of you”.(Huckleberry Finn,p.214)

In this situation,it became clear how cruel the White not only mistreated Black people but also White people Pap beats Huck for money, preventing him from getting an education and beating him up and locking him inside the house.All this shows what White people do.

Twain does not acknowledge Jim's independence until the end of the novel, when his mistress dies.Although he strongly criticizes servility.He thinks that just as a Black people are free in the North, similarly all the slaves in the South should also be freed. He should be allowed to live his life according to his wish.He wants that a law should be brought through which the problem of oppression can be solved.Legal action should be taken against slave owners.

Twain attacks religion,saying that Huck was forced to convert to Christianity by Miss Watson and Widow Douglas.Forcibly teaching religion to a person is also a kind of servility.Those people thought that Huck could be civilized teaching him christianity.such as:

“they fetched the niggers in and had prayers”.(Huckleberry Finn,p.196)

This fact shows that religion abolishes servility but it is not real.

Through this novel,Twain not only strongly denounces servility,but also strongly criticizes those who support servility.He criticizes Miss Watson for the way she enslaves Huck through her hypocrisy.She tries to civilize him according to her wishes, while she herself does all those things which show that she herself is uncivilized.

He also criticizes Pap for making Huck his slave just because of his The Pap treated his son Huck resulted in him running away from home in the end, causing him a lot of trouble and having to live a life of servility,under another person while he wanted to run away to freedom.The way Pap opposed giving Black people the vote shows that he hated Black people a lot.He wanted to see Black people as slaves.He does not consider them worthy of him.

## Conclusion

Mark Twain's novels are an important source of information on pre-Civil War literature in America, reflecting the period's connection to servility.A study of novels reveals that servility was the most dangerous for black people.The word nigger is used as an insult to black people.The way Jim was treated by his masters is a great example of servility.However,Huck was also treated like a slave by his father Pap.The fact that slaves were captured and brought back by their masters after they tried to run away shows that slaves were treated cruelly by their owners, who treated them like objects.In novels, there are also different types of servility that describe the social condition of American black people.Twain used to make people their slaves by deceiving them through Kings and Princes.They used to make the person believe them with fake tears.Then they used to make them their slaves and buy black people by taking them to villages.When black people realized that they would have to live as slaves in the village for long time, they would try to escape.They



would keep a hired person to catch all those black people and bring them back. The conclusion comes from Twain's novels are an important means of highlighting slaves in South America.

In brief we may say that servility is a black spot in the American society. It should completely be uprooted. A vapor light of equality should be burnt in the society. There should not be difference and discrimination between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the white and the black etc. We are of spring off one God. Former President of America, Abraham Lincoln says rightly

“If slavery is not wrong,  
nothing is wrong”

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