



THE THEME OF THE FREEDOM IN “THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER” BY MARK TWAIN

Makenova G.T.

Turkistan, Kazakhstan

K.A.Yasawi International Kazakh-Turkish University

e-mail: gmakenova@inbox.ru

Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, which was written in 1894, is still useful and important for today's children in spite of being old. It is also often read by adults with pleasure as well. Relationships, families, the natural world, and daily life are all themes in the stories. Children and people in general must deal with these significant issues throughout their lives. They learn how to act toward others in particular situations, who to trust, and what friendship entails—basic principles of our way of life. Therefore, in my research, I attempted to reveal the issue of “freedom” in American writer Mark Twain's masterpiece “*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*”.

As a man, Twain valued freedom in human beings and extended this virtue over to his own children. They were allowed all the freedom they could handle; the children were even encouraged to express their opinions in their charming girlish ways. Because he was so renamed in his day, the Clemens' household entertained many important and famous guests. The girls were permitted to visit with them and could partake of the festivities at the dinner table - a custom unheard of in Victorian times. Twain felt that these experiences could be only beneficial and educational for his girls [1].

So in this article I will analyze the concept of “freedom” in his famous work “*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*”.

“*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*” is Mark Twain's way of writing down his childhood in lively detail. The characters and settings were dear to him and he chose to depict the American Boy's childhood as fun and fancy-free.

The story is told through Tom's eyes and is enchanting and adventurous, just as any young boy's life would be. His daily life included mischief and budding young love, which is told with great detail. Although it is a fictional account of one young boy, the story of Tom Sawyer has touched many readers and lives on today as it did when it was written long ago.

Mark Twain wrote this novel using language common for the time period and location. His detailed accounts give the reader wonderful images and the constant dialogue makes the reader forget that they are reading a story and not sitting in on someone's live.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Twain portrays an accurate depiction of society during the pre-civil war time. Twain paints a picture of a boy's world along the Mississippi River, where two mischievous boys, Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, go on various mini adventures from running away from home to help putting an evil murderer, Injun Joe, behind bars. Though the novel is considered as a fantastical adventurous novel, the novel illustrates and represents Southern society regarding its cultural and racial aspects during the pre-civil war era. *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* effectively assesses



realism through a hypocritical portrayal of the colonial South through institution of religion, satire, and vernacular speech.

Both the characters Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn have been enjoyed both by grown-ups and children for generations, but it is an interesting fact that according to Mark Twain himself he “wrote them for adults exclusively” The book teaches about the morality and Values at that time. Tom and his friends are portrayed with the diverse personalities typical of real humans, good and bad, kind-hearted and mischievous at the same time. Consequently, they were not seen as good role models for small children who were supposed to learn the values of a Christian morality. However, through the negative side also, one can figure out morals are.

The novel is an educational work that helps children understand the importance of telling the truth.

All of the characters in this novel are carefully depicted. They are alive in the story, the reader can feel all of Tom’s emotions.

I can divide all the characters as protagonists and antagonists: The protagonist of the story is Tom Sawyer, a young boy who is filled with mischief and experiences many adventures. Tom is a mischievous boy with an active imagination who spends most of the novel getting himself, and often his friends, into and out of trouble. Despite his mischief, Tom has a good heart and a strong moral conscience. Injun Joe is the primary antagonist in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, described as a «half-breed» Native American.

Tom is the main character of the novel and tells the story to the reader. Although he may seem like a boy that is always in trouble, he’s intentions are good. Tom and Huck never plan on getting into trouble it has a way of finding them. Tom is driven by his youthful energy and mischief.

Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn are the two most well-known characters among American readers. In fact, one could say that they are the most famous pair in all of American literature. Tom and Huck are completely different from each other in nearly every way. In fact, they are polar opposites in basic living situations and in the ways in which they view the world.

While Tom and Huck share the common bond of being orphans, Tom lives in a civilized household with an aunt who loves him, who is tolerant of his boyish pranks, who is indulgent with his youthful escapades and whims, and who is deeply concerned about his welfare. In contrast, Huck Finn is alone, has no home, and his father is the town drunkard who completely ignores his son and, in his drunken rages, beats him violently. Thus, Huck has no one to take care of him. It is a sad commentary indeed that, at the end of the novel, Mr. Jones is the first adult ever to welcome Huck inside a private home.

While Tom sleeps in a comfortable bed at night, Huck might be found sleeping in someone’s barn, in a cardboard box, or his favorite sleeping place, in an empty hog heads barrel. In fact, this is where Tom finds him after one of their episodes. And while Tom is served three meals a day, Huck has to scrounge for food for himself. Their clothes are vastly different; Tom is dressed as a typical schoolboy would be dressed, but Huck wears discarded overalls held up by one buckle, and he most often goes barefoot.

Tom goes to the accepted and respectable school, attends Sunday school, and is invited to parties in other people’s homes. Huck does not attend school and, naturally, is not invited to parties. Instead he is free from responsibility and moves freely in and out of



the town, sometimes disappearing for days, and is never missed. His education is from the proverbial «school of hard knocks» [2, p.321].

In contrast to Tom, Huck is an outcast from society. Rather than conform, Huck thrives on his freedom from such restraints as society imposes. He cannot abide by the strictures of living in a regular household where there is no smoking and no cussing and where he must wear proper clothes, keep decent hours, and conform to proper manners, especially table manners. Whereas Tom's life is bound by society, by rules, and by acceptable behavior, Huck's life is one of freedom; he can come and go as he pleases.

In general when we characterize people in the story we identify them as flat and round characters. After description I would like to denote their characters according to their actions in the story. Tom, Huck, Joe are round characters, that is they change their characters in the course of the story. At the beginning of the novel they were naughty, mischievous boys who want to be free from school and rules. They want to be away from home, they don't value people's love around them. But at the end they change they become more mature. They start to understand the value of life.

Other characters can be described as flat characters as they don't show any change. They preserve their characters from beginning till the end.

Freedom plays an enormous role in the book Tom Sawyer. Whether it is people earning freedom or people not being granted it, every young boy in St. Petersburg wanted some form of freedom. The word freedom means the power to say and do what you want. Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn and Joe Harper are all boys seeking freedom [3, p.256]. Freedom is the key reason the boys run away to Jackson Island. Freedom is one of the main themes in the book.

Tom is always looking for ways to earn freedom. One of the main plots in the story is Tom's quest for freedom. Freedom gives Tom a sense of accomplishment after he finishes a deed or task.

As Henri Bergson says "To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly", in the novel the main character Tom shows some change [4].

In the beginning of the novel, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, by Mark Twain, the main character Tom was very immature. He was manipulative, puerile, and egocentric. He would manipulate others for his own benefit, not caring about any damage he caused. As the novel continues, Tom begins to develop and start becoming a man. He journeys through adolescence, and starts to mature. Because of his growth into manhood, he starts to do things for others, and commit courageous and brave acts. As Tom Sawyer grows throughout the novel, he starts to show signs of maturity and commits courageous acts.

As the novel progresses, Tom shows signs of maturity. In the beginning of the novel, Tom Sawyer was very selfish and didn't really care about responsibility. Later in the novel, Tom witnesses things and goes through many experiences that helped him sophisticate and taught him many important lessons. He begins to put others before himself, and tries to help others, which show that he is becoming more wise and responsible. When Huckleberry Finn is gifted with a chance to live normal life, he wants to abandon it to run away. Since Tom cared about Huck, he convinces him to stay and try to deal with the certain rules that living like a kid have. Tom uses his manipulative ways



but not for his own good, this time. When trying to convince Huck to return home Tom says, “Huck, I wouldn’t want to, and I don’t want to-but what would people say? Why they’d say, ‘Mph! Tom Sawyer’s Gang! Pretty low characters in it’ They’d mean you, Huck. You wouldn’t like that, and I wouldn’t” [5]. Huck then agrees to go back to Widow Douglas so he could be a part of their “gang”. Tom manipulates Huck to go back to the Widow Douglas. This situation shows Tom’s growth and adulthood because in the beginning of the novel, Tom would manipulate people for his own benefit. But, this situation shows how Tom manipulated people for good. Tom wanted Huck to live a better life with the Widow, so he said that he could be in their gang if he goes back. But in actuality, Tom just wanted Huck to live a good life. Tom shows his adulthood when he begins to use his manipulative nature for other’s benefits.

Tom shows boldness throughout the novel, by doing things that others would fear to do. Since the beginning of the novel, Tom has done things that normally people wouldn’t do. But, when Tom and Huck witness a murder, Tom does something incredibly brave. Even though both Huck and Tom make an agreement to never speak of what happened the night of the murder, Tom defies that because he did not want an innocent man to be punished. When viewing the trial of Muff Potter Tom decides to speak up and say who the true murderer is even though his safety may be in danger because of this. “Tom began-hesitatingly at first, but as he warmed up to his subject, his words flowed more and more easily: in a little while every sound ceased but his own voice; every eye fixed itself upon him; with parted lips and bated breath the audience hung upon his words, taking no note of time, rapt in the ghastly fascinations of the tale” [9]. Tom spoke about the night of the murder even though he knew that Injun Joe would come after him. He decided that he needed to speak up about the murder, even though he was slightly scared. Everyone watched as he spoke about the incident, bravely.

To be courageous is to face difficulties without having fear. When Tom sees that Muff Potter is being accused of murdering someone, when he really didn’t do it, he speaks up. This is remarkably brave because he says who the true murderer is. And he knows that once he testifies and says that Injun Joe is the actual murderer, Injun Joe would want revenge and Tom would then be in danger. Even though Tom knew this information prior to saying what he saw, Tom decided to testify anyways because he knew it was the right thing to do. Tom shows bravery and courage when he speaks up about the true murderer of the doctor.

Tom Sawyer starts showing bravery and signs of adulthood, as he ages throughout the novel. Tom shows fearlessness and adult qualities when he tries to help others and speaks the truth. He helps Huck try to live a normal kid’s life by convincing him to go back to the people that love him. Tom also helps a man that was wrongly accused in trial by speaking up about what really happened. As people grow older, they become more cultured and some begin to help others and do things with audacity.

So the author ends the story of boys with their willing to find that hidden treasure. May be Mark Twain wanted to leave it to the reader to judge the end. Nevertheless he depicted that the adventures had great influence on the main character Tom. He became more mature who understands the value of life and love of people around him, who can differentiate bad and good evil.



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