

CHAPTER IV

The Significance of the Relationship Between Huckleberry Finn and Jim

As described in chapter three that the main characters have found the characteristics to their friendship, now the thesis writer wants to analyze that their friendship really brings significance to their life. **As** mentioned in chapter three, Huckleberry Finn decides to escape from the home of Widow Douglas and from his father, Pap Finn. He escapes from the uncomfortable, unsatisfied, and unfree civilization and **from** the cruel, unaffectioned, and drunken father. He wants to achieve his freedom for pleasure that according to his society is just a

freedom that wastes time. Meanwhile, Jim escapes in order to seek his freedom from the bondage of slavery. He has dreams to be reunited with his family even it jeopardizes his freedom as a free man, because his escape is obviously against the law. Both characters are involved in 'slavery' and each tries to find the way out to break the chains of their bondage.

In this chapter, the thesis writer discusses how the friendship between Huckleberry Finn and Jim brings significance to their life. She focuses on the analysis of Huckleberry's attitude toward Jim as the black representative. Then, she shows that because of these attitudes will lead Huckleberry to the new character of having friendship with the Black and maturity. She also focuses on the analysis of how Jim's attitude toward the Whites especially to Huckleberry Finn, as the chosen person who becomes Jim's friend. Then, she shows that because of his attitude of accepting Huckleberry as his friend, it leads Jim to the new point of view in having friendship with the Whites that brings significance to his life.

III.1 Huckleberry Finn's Attitude Towards the Blacks

Huckleberry Finn has ambivalent attitude towards the Blacks. On one side he accepts his society views that teach him to underestimate, and consider the Blacks as a part of a property, not as human beings. However, he rejects what

the society teaches him after he knows Jim's personality. He becomes unsure about his feeling toward **the** Blacks. So far he just takes it for granted what society teaches him in his childhood. In the process of growing up, the environment where Huckleberry lives takes' part in influencing him. It is to be remembered that Huckleberry Finn is just fourteen years of age, the time when most of his activities are devoted to make jokes and play. It influences his way of thinking and his way of relating himself with the Blacks, in this case is represented by Jim, a slave.

III.1.1 Huckleberry Finn's Rejection Toward the Blacks

Huckleberry Finn rejects the Blacks because **of** his childhood education experiences among his environment. He lives in the society which teaches him to look down upon the Blacks, mostly as the slaves at that time. His society's attitudes approximately also affect his mind. The thesis writer finds that there are three factors that influence Huckleberry's mind in perceiving the Blacks. The factors come from Pap Finn **as** his father, Tom Sawyer **as** his friend, and society or his environment where he lives.

Pap Finn, as the closest person is the first to influence Huckleberry Finn's mind and personality. Pap is a degraded character, and **his** appearance and attitude provide Huckleberry with bad examples **of** humanity. **His** drunkenness

and violence threaten Huckleberry's education and finally interrupt it, and later threaten his life. Pap Finn's attack on Negroes and the government expand his degradation into broader context (Sloane 42). "Oh, yes, this a wonderful govment, wonderful. Why, looky here. There was a free nigger there from Ohio -- a mulatter, most as white as a white man" (Twain 27).

Pap starts to make complaint to the black's existence by attacking the "mulatter," a "free nigger" from Ohio. There **is** an irony here showing Pap's intolerance toward the Negroes by saying "free" to the nigger. He shows his selfishness in his speech to the Negroes that is against humanity and support slavery in its contents. The following quotation will strengthen and show how Pap dislikes the Negroes.

"There was a free nigger there from Ohio. He had the whitest shirt on you ever see, too, and the shiniest hat; and there ain't a man in that town that's got as fine clothes as what he had; and he had a gold watch and chain, and a silver-headed cane- . . . They said he was a p'fessor in a college, and could talk all kinds of languages, and knowed everything. And that ain't the wust. They said he could vote when he was at home. Well, that let me out. Thinks I, what is the country a-coming to? . . . but when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed **out**. I says I'll

never vote again ag'in as long as I live. I says to the people, why ain't this nigger put up at auction and be sold?" (27)

Pap Finn's attack on Negroes and the government shows his disapproval to the freedom given to the slaves. The word "the whitest shirt of the free nigger" reveals Pap's bigotry to the slavery. He is a supporter of injustice of the slavery. It proves that Pap really hates the Blacks and does not agree to the free status given to the Negroes. Furthermore, Pap's point of view has influenced Huckleberry's mind in his way of treating the Black and in this case is Jim.

Tom Sawyer **is taking** apart in influencing Huckleberry Finn's mind too. He has a gang called Tom Sawyer's Gang, in which Tom serves **as** the leader of the gang. **As** a leader, he has an authority to order the members **of** the gang to do whatever task he wants them to do. Huckleberry and his other friends usually go out together and play for fun. Tom also sets up a robber gang and discusses ransom with his gang of robbers. Tom always lives in his childish world of fantasy. Everything **is** a game for him. For example, when he plays a **trick** on Jim with no regrets at all because he does it for fun. This quotation below will show how Tom plays some trick on Jim, and he asked Huckleberry to follow and help him eventhough Huck does not want to do it.

“Just then Jim begun to breathe heavy; next he begun to snore. Tom he made a sign to me When we was ten foot off Tom whispered to me, and wanted to tie Jim to the tree for fun. But I said no; he might wake and make some disturbance. Then Tom said he hadn’t got candles enough, and he would slip in the kitchen and get some more. I didn’t want him to try. But Tom wanted to resk it; so we slid in there and got three candles Then we got out, and I was in a sweat to get away; but nothing would do Tom but he must crawl to where Jim was, on his hands and knees, and play something on him. Tom said he slipped **Jim’s** hat off of his head and hung it on a limb right over him, and Jim stirred a little, but he didn’t wake” (5-6).

Tom gives Huckleberry Finn huge influence in shaping his way to treat Blacks. For Tom, slaves are only a part of property who deserves to get any treatments from their master. He also likes to make jokes to the people that often make them feel disturbed. He leads and gives orders to the members of the gang, including Huckleberry Finn, because he has a major role in leading his gang robber. Even Huckleberry Finn refuses to help Tom make fun **of** Jim, however, he cannot stop Tom from doing what he wants to do. Therefore, Huckleberry has to carry out all of Tom’s commands if he still wants to be considered as a member of that

group and play together with them. **If** not, he will be signed out from the group and will never be accepted again as a member, and has no friends.

The society where Huckleberry Finn lives also take part to determine Huckleberry's behavioral pattern in the way of treating the Blacks. "The society in which Huckleberry lives represent the slave-holding American society. The Phelps farm and the surrounding community are a microcosm **of** the way the South treats the Negro problem" (Nilon 62). "In the Phelps' **farm** community, and in the larger South, black people who pursue their interests and freedom, are considered insane." For them, Jim is mad and dangerous (a runaway slave), a bad nigger. "A bad nigger should be lynched to give an example **for** other niggers of what may happen to bad niggers" (72). However, sometimes the black people have a white heart inside. By contrast, the white people may possibly have the blackest heart inside them. The quotations below will show the way the society considers the Blacks at that moment:

"Give a nigger an inch and he'll take an ell" (88).

"I says to the people, why ain't this nigger put up at auction **and** sold? . . . that's what I want to know" (27).

"Good gracious! anybody hurt? No'm, lulled a nigger. Well, it's lucky; because sometimes people do get **hurt**" (221).

“Whenever we see anybody coming we can tie Jim hand and foot with a rope, and lay him in the wigwam and show this handbill and say we captured him up the river . . . and are going down to get the reward. Handcuffs and chains would look still better on Jim. Ropes are the correct thing . . . -- (134).

“How is servants treated in England? Do they treat 'em better 'n we treat our niggers? No! **A** servant ain't nobody there. They treat them worse than dogs They never see a holiday from year's end to year's end; never go to the circus, nor theater, nor nigger shows, nor nowheres, nor church” (174).

Society's viewpoints to the Blacks are very irrational. They consider the Black as they treat the animals or properties. Most **of** the society viewpoints concern with the bad treatment to the Blacks as if they deserved for it. These kinds of quotations above are intended to suggest the bad effects of local thought on a good mind like Huckleberry Finn's. **As** a growing up young boy, of course, the environment, the family, and friends take apart to build and influence someone's character. Unfortunately, the society which Huckleberry lives at that moment is the society that supports and practices the slavery. Therefore, these points are put into Huckleberry Finn's mind and become influencing his relationship with Jim afterwards.

III.1.2 Huckleberry Finn's Acceptance Toward the Blacks

Huckleberry Finn's acceptance attitude toward the Blacks, **starts** when he initiates to meet Jim in their quest of freedom in Jackson's Island. In their process **of** having friendship, Huckleberry **and** Jim start to establish the motif of mutual trust responsibility in their relationship. It begins when Jim told a secret of why he decided to escape. He begins to believe Huckleberry Finn will keep his secret when he says:

“Well, dey's reasons. But you wouldn' tell on me ef I 'uz to tell you, would you, Huck?”

“Blamed if I would, Jim.”

“Well, I b'lieve you, Huck. I--I run off (42).

“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 Abolitionist, and despise me for keeping mum-but that don't make no difference. I ain't a-going to tell, and I ain't a-going back there, anyways. *So*, now, le's **know** all about it” (43).

Huckleberry Finn even adds the proper ambivalence to his not telling by saying that people would call him a “low down Abolitionist and despise” him. However, he makes a clear statement which says that he will not come back again to the society where he belongs. He is trying to establish a mutual trust responsibility and mutual support with Jim, and without realizing it, he enters into partnership with Jim. “His closeness in mutual simplicity and sympathy with Jim provides him with his personal basis for abandoning the restrictions of the authorities of the village, their laws, and their public opinion” (Sloane 54).

III.2 Jim’s Attitude as the Black Representative Towards the Whites

Jim’s attitude towards the Whites is influenced by the society point of view that tells the blacks are not human being. They are seen as similar as animals or chattel. This point of view has inherited since his ancestor lifetime into his life. Blacks are portrayed as the foolish human being. In **Mark** Twain’s article mentions that, “this incident is a turning point in his portrayal of Jim, who at last has evolved from a stereotypical buffoon into a sensitive a human being. Then, in facing its challenge in Twain’s portrayal of blacks, he came to the difficult realization not **only** that slavery was inhumane but also that black people **were** human beings” (Subryan 101). Society’s viewpoint that underestimates the Blacks can be seen when Jim on Jackson’s Island for his “**dignity as** a human

being, and Twain portrays him **as** a buffoon who is the butt of Huckleberry's jokes" at that time (97). Another example shows when Jim cannot understand the idea of human speaking different languages. "He reasons that a cat and a cow cannot "talk" the same language because they are different animals, but since human beings are all the same, they should speak alike (97)." Huckleberry Finn who is unable to answer Jim's logic comment that: "I see it warn't no use wasting words- you can learn a nigger to argue. So I quit"(80). Huckleberry's statement is an "irony of Jim's and damaging because it portrays Jim as a fool, and at least superficially, supports a broader misconception of black people as incapable of reason (and **thus** not fully human)" (97). Other example can be seen when Huckleberry Finn continues to treat Jim as a fool in the crucial reunion after Jim **has** given him up for lost in a storm. Huckleberry Finn responds by pretending the separation was only a dream, and Jim at first is confused, until he sees trash from the storm on the raft and rebukes Huck by reminding him **of** their bond of caring and concern, which Huckleberry has turned into a joke. Huckleberry Finn gets **an** important lesson describing the event from a later and more mature perspective, as he says: "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. I didn't do him no more mean **tricks**, and I wouldn't done that one if I'd a knowed it would make him feel that way" (86).

Time after time, Huckleberry Finn is surprised to find that blacks have feelings like those of whites: love their families, concern **for** younger persons, anger and pain when it concerns with the matter of joke. “For black readers Jim’s humanity is mainly affirmed by his natural desire for freedom to assert his manhood as a husband and father” (101). As they escape down the Mississippi on a raft, Huckleberry **and** Jim help and protect each other. And after Jim sacrifices his freedom to save Tom’s life at the end of the novel, Huckleberry concludes that Jim is “white inside.” From the beginnings of slavery in North-America, it was to the economic advantage of Euro-Americans to define persons of African descent, if not **as** animals, then at least **as** less than full members of the human race— a perspective that enabled whites to barter and sell human beings in both Africa and America without serious pangs of conscience (Jones 174-5). In Huckleberry Finn as Twain’s most controversial novel, “one can see clearly how Jim, the Negroes slave, emerges not only **as** a comic figure but also as a sensitive, caring human being” (Subryan 96).

III.3 The Significance of the Friendship Between Huckleberry Finn and Jim

Huckleberry Finn becomes a boss in his own world, seeking merely his own comfort, safety, and survival in Jackson’s Island. Actually, that is the kind **of** freedom that he has always been dreaming of, but after three days and nights,

he starts feeling lonely and lonesome. He wants someone to accompany him. The quotation below shows how Huckleberry feels lonesome, and his reaction when he gets a company is:

“When it was dark I set by my camp-fire smoking, and feeling pretty well satisfied; but by and by it got sort of lonesome And so for three days and nights. No difference—just the same thing” (39).

.. . . it was Miss Watson’s Jim! I bet I was glad to see him. I was ever so glad to see Jim. I warn’t lonesome again” (41).

The encounter with Jim represents Huckleberry Finn’s need for some sort of human companionship. The need for human contact is pitted against Huckleberry’s past values as Jim confesses that he has run off. He decides to keep his word to Jim in spite of avoiding the authority of society. His closeness in mutual simplicity and sympathy with Jim provides him with his personal basis for abandoning the restrictions of the authorities of the village, their laws, and their public opinion. Without realizing, they enter into partnership. This beginning of his acceptance of Jim foreshadows Huckleberry’s later set of values when he totally defies for the sake of his friendship with Jim (Twain 25-6).

His friendship with Jim is endeavored to survive when his forgetfulness of natural rules causes him to nearly kill Jim when he attempts to play his first joke

on Jim by curling a snakeskin in Jim's blankets. Huckleberry's "ever so natural" joke is almost deadly as the snake's mate strikes Jim.

"I went to the cavern to get some, and found a rattlesnake in there. I killed him, and curled him up on the foot of Jim's blanket. Ever *so* natural, thinking there'd be some fun when Jim found him there. Well, by night I forgot all about the snake, and when Jim flung himself down on the blanket while I struck a light the snake's mate was there, and bit him" (52-3).

However, hiding a snakeskin in Jim's blankets to frighten him is actually an example of Tom's practice of playing a practical joke and more personal action to give effects on other people. **As** a young boy, Huckleberry Finn does not intend to hurt Jim. What he wants to do is merely making fun and joke. Unfortunately, when he attempts the same pattern as Tom's, Jim was almost facing into near-convulsions and death. His recovery takes four days and nights. Actually, the result is absolutely not giving fun at all. It makes Huckleberry regret **of** having used Tom's joke pattern. Now it seems that Huckleberry Finn forgets the condition of sharing a friendly relationship, the feeling and behavior that exist between friends. Anyway, his regrets give them helps build on their progress of their relationship later. These joke episodes are seen by most critics **as** starting

crucial stages in Huckleberry's maturation, and to show his changing respect for Jim as a clear evidence. The quotation below will show Huckleberry Finn's regret for his joke on Jim which almost costs Jim's life:

“That all comes of my being such a fool Then I slid out quiet and
threwed the snakes clear away amongst the bushes; for I warn't going
to let Jim find out it was all my fault. I made up my mind I wouldn't
ever take a-hold of a snake-skin again with my hands, now that I see
what had come of it. Jim said he reckoned I believe him next time”
(53).

The next event involves Huckleberry Finn's character and another participant character, Mrs. Judith Loftus. Huck and Jim in their runaway are trying to get some information about their whereabouts. So, they land on and Huckleberry meets Mrs. Judith Loftus. Mrs. Loftus is described as both a newcomer to the community and an insightful humanitarian character. She gives Huck some information about Pap with the reward of two hundred dollars, and a runaway slave who is believed to have killed Huckleberry Finn with the reward of three hundred dollars to capture him. The quotation **below** will show Huckleberry's loyalty to Jim eventhough **it** deals with money, as he says: “Three hundred dollars **is** a power of money. I wish my mother could get it” (58). **As**

usual things happen, a large amount of money could make someone betrays his or her friend in order to get profit for himself or herself. Luckily, Huckleberry does not get tempted by the reward of recapturing Jim. It shows that he has loyalty to Jim as his new friend.

Incidentally, Mrs. Loftus discovers the importance of the three hundred dollars' reward for Jim. Indeed, it is not a small amount for her. Obviously Judith Loftus is motivated by the greed to recapture the runaway slave, but not the runaway apprentice. It shows her character representing the society's community that even the corrupting influences of race happen on this good person. She gives him food and this time lets him escape. She stands on her own decision to befriend the runaway white apprentice even while hoping to reap the reward from capturing the runaway black slave. Huckleberry Finn rejects Jim's gossipy reasoning about their escape from Mrs. Loftus's husband by saying that he does not care what the reason is that they were not caught just so long. In the mean time, Huckleberry, of course, has set and uses all his skills to secure Jim's escape, carefully noting times, doubling back, and lighting a decoy campfire to throw off pursuit: "Git up and hump yourself, Jim! There ain't a minute to lose. They're after us! Jim never asked no questions, he never said a word; but the way he worked for the next half an hour showed about how he was scared. By that time everything we had in the world was on our raft . . . -- (62).

The use of the word ‘us’ represents the full joining of the fates of the two refugees. A friend is someone who is not an enemy, a person from whom there is nothing to fear. A friend is a person showing kindness and understanding, a helper, supporter, and an adviser. In this case, Huckleberry shows himself as a supporter to Jim, and his loyalty not surrender Jim to the society where Mrs. Judith Loftus lives has shown that he is trying to keep mutual trust responsibility on Jim. Huck still **does** not want to tell his real secret with Jim. The quotation below shows Huckleberry Finn’s loyalty once again to Jim eventhough he has a chance to betray him by telling where Jim is.

“Right then along comes a skiff with two men in it with guns, and they stopped and I stopped.” One of them says:

“Any men on it?”

“Only one, sir,”

“Well, there’s five niggers run off to-night up yonder, above the head of the bend. Is your man white or black?”

“He’s white.”

“I reckon we’ll **go** and see for ourselves,”

“I wish **you** would . . . He’s sick. I will, sir, I will, honest—but don’t leave **us** please . . .”

“Keep away, boy—keep to looard. Your pap’s got the smallpox, and you know it precious well. Do you want to spread it all over?” (89-90)

So far, they have been practicing to share handling the situation, share the feelings, and try to keep the goodwill to their friendship through events. A person who shares the same feelings of natural liking and understanding, the same interests and so on, but is not a member of the family is considered as friend. Either Huckleberry Finn or Jim **is** not a member of the same family, but there is an affection or esteem, mutual attachment, and goodwill to keep on their friendship. When Jim and Huck go forth from the House of Death their odyssey begins. Just after the storm, when the house of Death floats by, it is Jim who goes aboard first, sees **the** corpse, and won’t let Huck behold it (Hoffman 104).

“De man ain’t asleep—he’s dead. You hold still--I’llgo en see. Come in Huck, but doan’ **look** at his face—it’s too gashly. I didn’t **look** at him at all. I didn’t want to see him” (50).

“After breakfast I wanted to talk about the dead man and guess out how he come to be killed, but Jim didn’t want to. He said it would fetch bad luck; but I couldn’t keep from studying over it and wishing I knowed who shot the man, and what they done it **for**” (52).

Jim comprehends the humiliation of Pap's death and tries to protect Huckleberry **Finn** from the cruel knowledge. He can now act as Huckleberry's father. He is now free to take the place that Pap has never been worthy of holding as Huckleberry's spiritual father (Hoffman 104). He automatically assumes the role as a father for Huck, protecting and covering the bad influence toward his son, as an accomplishment of his missing role as a father to his family. As Jim has ever warned him, "it was the worst bad luck in the world to touch a snake skin" (52). This he discovers when he **kills** a rattler and coils it in Jim's bed. Because of this regardful relationship, then Huckleberry realizes that he cannot play tricks on Jim as he could on Tom or Ben Rogers. Another example whereby Jim shows his affection to Huckleberry Finn could be seen in this quotation:

"I had the middle watch, you know, but I was pretty sleepy by that time, so Jim he said he would stand the first half of it **for** me; he was always **mighty** good that way, Jim was. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, 'stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping" (128).

". . . 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 would always call me honey, and pet me, and do everything he could think **of** me, and how good he always was” (214).

Through the love that Jim gives to Huckleberry Finn from such touching moments Huck learns, to his surprise, that Jim “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 (chap.23) (36). Further Huckleberry’s choice to “go to hell” has little to do with any respect he has gained for Jim as a human being with an inalienable right to be owned by no one (Henry 32). So, there is no denying the rightness **of** Huckleberry Finn’s decision to risk his soul **for** Jim. The quotation that shows Huckleberry’s mature decision to help Jim as his friend from the jail and death penalty can be seen in:

“I set up a shout—and then another—and run this way and that in the woods, whooping and screeching; but it warn’t no use—old Jim was gone. Then I set down and cried; I couldn’t help it. But I couldn’t **set** still long. After all this long journey . . . here it was all come to nothing, everything all busted up and ruined, because they could have the heart to serve Jim such a trick as that, **and** make him a slave again all his life, **for** forty dirty dollars. And then think of me! I see Jim before me all the time: in the day and in the night time, sometimes

moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a-floating along, talking and singing and laughing . . . and how good he always was, 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 no. I studied a minute, sort of my holding breath, and then says to myself "All right, then, I'll go to hell." . . . for a starter I would go to work **and** steal Jim out of slavery again; and if I could think up anything worse, I would do that, too" (211-14).

Anyhow, the disharmony in the friendship can happen sometimes. The occasion comes when Jim and Huckleberry Finn find each other after being separated by the fog. Huck, with a joke, convinces Jim that they have been together on the raft all the time, and Jim must have dreamed about their separation. The quotation below will show how Jim feelings hurt of Huckleberry's joke:

"What do they stan' for? I's gwyne tell you. When I got all wore out wid work, en wid de callin' for you, en went to sleep, my heart **wuz** mos' breake **bekase** you wuz los', en I didn' k'yer no mo' what become er me en de raf'. En when I wake **up** en find you back ag'in, all safe en soun', de tears come, en I could 'a' got down on my knees en **kiss** yo' foot, I's **so** thankful. En all **you** wuz thinkin' 'bout wuz

how you could make a fool uv ole Jim wid a lie. Dat truck dah is trash; en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fren's en makes 'em ashamed" (86).

Huckleberry Finn's regret toward what his done really gives him a valuable experience in his life. From the lesson of the snakeskin, he now realizes that he is bound to Jim by ties too strong for mischievous trifling, tries so strong that he must break the strongest mores of the society he was raised in to acknowledge them. As he said that "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble to a nigger; but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterward, neither" (Hoffman 105). His personal affection for Jim governs his overthrow of societal mores. It must be remembered that Huck does not adjudge slavery to be wrong, but he selectively disregards a system that he ultimately believes is right. He is expressing views he still holds. His emancipator attitudes extend no further his love for Jim. No one can deny the mainly indignation revealed by Jim when Huck attempts to convince him that he has only dreamed their separation during the night of the heavy fog. It hurts Jim's feeling so much that shows he has a heart and needs an apologize when he is insulted. Furthermore, these experiences no matter how bad or good for the main male characters, give them valuable meanings that able to bring significance into their life.