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THE UNDISCOVERED "TERRITORY":
MARK TWAIN'S LATER HUCK AND TOM STORIES

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation looks at all works of Mark Twain's concerning the boys Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, particularly those written after the completion of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884). These include the two published narratives, Tom Sawyer Abroad (1893) and "Tom Sawyer, Detective" (1896), and five fragments unpublished in Twain's lifetime, but recently issued by the University of California Press in the volumes of the Mark Twain Papers Mark Twain's Hannibal, Huck & Tom (ed. Walter Blair) and Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts (ed. William M. Gibson). These five fragments are "Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer Among the Indians" (1884), "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" (1897-1899), "Doughface" (c. 1897), "Schoolhouse Hill" (1898), and "Tom Sawyer's Gang Plans a Naval Battle" (c. 1900).

After completing Huckleberry Finn, Twain wrote or tried to write many more stories about Tom and Huck, continuing their adventures. Most of these were never finished, and the two that were completed and published are generally considered to be greatly inferior to the earlier novels about the boys. Despite their flaws, though, these later narratives do possess hitherto undetected significance and value.

A major aspect of the later stories about the boys is Twain's deliberate and persistent attempt over a period of thirty years to have Tom Sawyer grow up from a thoughtless boy to a responsible adult. Twain's efforts to do this are visible in most of the later works, and the prominence of this attempted development demonstrates that Twain was vitally interested in the problems of maturity and becoming an adult. For him, childhood was not merely a nostalgic refuge from the problems and complexities of life, as scholars have tended to assume; rather, it was a time of often painful testing in preparation for the difficulties of adult life.

In addition, the later Tom and Huck stories contain elements that both parallel and supplement Twain's better known works from this time. The differences and similarities between the narratives about the boys and his other works help to enhance our understanding of Twain's thinking on a number of subjects. Among these subjects are the Transcendent Figure, the "Matter of Hannibal," and the folly of romanticism.

This dissertation, then, casts new light on hitherto obscure writings by Twain; it attempts to assess their value and illuminate aspects of Twain's thought that have not yet been the subject of close scrutiny. In particular, the willingness of Twain to grapple with issues of profound complexity is revealed in these works more clearly perhaps than anywhere else in his canon.

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INTRODUCTION

The long and persistent interest with which Mark Twain regarded his most famous characters, Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer, is a surprisingly little known and critically undervalued aspect of the author's career. Despite the vast amounts written about him, and particularly about his masterpiece, the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, it is not generally known that for virtually the entire span of Twain's life as a writer of fiction--from roughly 1870 to well into the 1900's--he created two novels, two novellas, a story, five lengthy unfinished narratives, at least two brief fragments, a play, and extensive notes, synopses, and outlines concerning the boys. This is a far greater amount, and written over a much longer period, than the material Twain wrote about two other characters who intrigued him, Colonel Sellers (of The Gilded Age [1873], "Colonel Sellers as a Scientist" [1884], and The American Claimant [1892]) and Simon Wheeler (of "The Celebrated Jumping Frog" [1867] and an unpublished novel and play, "Simon Wheeler, Detective" [1877-1879]). The great mass of material and the number of years over which the boys continued to interest him indicate the strong hold that Huck and Tom had on Mark Twain's imagination.

There are several significant aspects of these works that have not been recognized by the relatively few scholars who have noticed the various unpublished pieces. First, despite the composition of these works over such a long period and in the varying

circumstances of Twain's life, they possess a surprising consistency and coherence as a unit. In fact, they might almost be considered a continuing saga of the two boys. Secondly, these stories--particularly the later ones--show Twain grappling seriously with a number of ideas and themes through approaches that often are unique to these works. Consideration of these Huck and Tom stories, therefore, illuminates characteristics of Twain's thought that are not revealed in the better known sources. The intention of this dissertation is to provide such a consideration.

The form of the dissertation will be thus: Following the introduction will be a chapter focussing on previous criticism of the later Huck and Tom narratives, covering some of the problems Twain scholars have encountered in dealing with these stories and attempting to correct several misconceptions and errors. Then I will discuss the history of the composition of the stories over more than thirty years of Twain's life. This will be followed by extensive commentary on the major themes and concepts of these works, including the theme of maturation, the workings of fate, the "Matter of Hannibal," the Transcendent Figure, and Twain's attack on romanticism. Included in this discussion will be relationships between these stories and other works by Twain from the same periods in his life. As I hope to demonstrate, the ideas explored in these stories provide their value not only for Twain scholars, but for general readers as well.

The material that will be covered in this dissertation includes, first and foremost, all the surviving narratives about the boys written after Huckleberry Finn. They include the fragments "Huck and Tom among the Indians" (1884), "Doughface" (c. 1897), "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" (1897-99), "Schoolhouse Hill" (1898), "Tom Sawyer's Gang Plans a Naval Battle" (c. 1900), and a play based on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, written 1884-85. None of these works were published during Twain's lifetime, and were not generally available to scholars until they were published in 1969 in volumes of the Mark Twain Papers issued by the University of California Press.¹

As well, there are the two published narratives written by Twain in the 1890's, and now held for the most part in critical ill-repute, Tom Sawyer Abroad (1893) and "Tom Sawyer, Detective" (1896).² Attention will also be paid to a much earlier fragment, a tentative version of Tom Sawyer dating from the early 1870's, called the "Boy's Manuscript." This work was published by Bernard DeVoto in Mark Twain at Work in 1942.³

These works cover a fascinating range of plot and theme, as a brief description of each one illustrates. The "Boy's Manuscript" is humorous and satirical, concerning the puppy-love affair between the hero (here called Billy Rogers) and a little girl. The work can be considered a draft of Tom Sawyer, for many of its scenes and dialogue reappear virtually unchanged in the later novel. Unlike the latter, the "Manuscript" is written in the first person, however.

"Huck and Tom among the Indians" is Twain's first attempt to write a sequel to Huckleberry Finn. Written soon after he finished that novel, the fragment is an account of the journey the two boys and Jim make out west into the Indian territory immediately after their return from the Phelps farm in Arkansas to St. Petersburg. A grim piece, the plot centres on the kidnapping of Jim and two daughters of a pioneer family by a band of bloodthirsty Indians. Huck, Tom and the fiancé of the elder daughter are in pursuit when the fragment breaks off.

Tom Sawyer Abroad is also an account of a journey, a voyage by the trio aboard a mysteriously powered balloon. Built by a half-crazed scientist who falls overboard shortly after the voyage begins, the balloon drifts eastward across the Atlantic and eventually to Egypt. There the narrative abruptly ends when the boys are ordered home by Aunt Polly.

"Tom Sawyer, Detective" returns the boys (this time without Jim) to the Phelps farm in Arkansas, where Uncle Silas is arrested for the murder of the brother of a rich landowner, Brace Dunlap. Brace wishes to marry the eldest daughter of the Phelps but has been refused. When the convoluted plot is finally resolved through Tom Sawyer's clever detective work, it is revealed that Brace tried to frame Silas for the murder in revenge for this refusal. The story is based on an account of a Danish murder in 1607 that Twain overheard at a dinner party.

"Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" is probably the most significant of the later writings. A complex and elaborate narrative, it concerns the scheme Tom Sawyer invents to cause excitement in St. Petersburg by seeming to enact a slave uprising. But the prank turns suddenly serious when Jim is arrested for the murder of the town's slave-trader. Tom knows where the real murderers are hiding, but refuses to go to the authorities with the information until it is too late and the men have vanished. The boy painfully acknowledges the extent of his foolish immaturity and recognizes how callously he has treated Jim in the course of the story. His self-knowledge is unprecedented in the Huck and Tom narrative, and evidently represents a conscious attempt by Twain to teach Tom a lesson in moral responsibility.

"Schoolhouse Hill" is a version of the Mysterious Stranger story set in St. Petersburg. The arrival of a mysterious youth at the village school one morning causes a sensation among the children, including Tom and Huck, for he has supernatural powers. But after the second chapter of the story, the children's milieu is forgotten as new characters are developed and vague plans are outlined for the salvation of human beings in this life. The narrative breaks off abruptly before this idea can be explored.

Both "Doughface" and "Tom Sawyer's Gang Plans a Naval Battle" are very brief fragments, perhaps parts of lost longer stories. The former concerns a bizarre trick played on an old lady by a girl in a doughface mask; the latter is an account of

the elaborate plans by Tom and his friends for a mock naval battle to be staged in rafts on the river.

The play of Tom Sawyer is based loosely on the events of the novel, culminating in the death of Injun Joe and the discovery of the treasure. It is a superficial and tedious work which tells little new about the boys or their world.

In addition, the existence of at least two more lengthy fragments is known, though they have not been located. These are "Tom Sawyer's Mystery" (1893) and an unnamed work involving the return of the boys to St. Petersburg as adults, written in 1902.⁴ Hypotheses regarding these works and their place in the Huck and Tom saga, will be made on the basis of what is known about them. As well, references will be made where necessary to the extensive notes, outlines, and synopses of works about the boys.

Naturally, a discussion of the later stories about Tom and Huck cannot help but include emphasis on the two earlier works, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. References to these novels will be made as needed. Also, mention will be made of parallels and similarities, particularly in the treatment of themes, between the later Huck and Tom stories and other works from the same period by Twain, to put the material about the boys into perspective.

The primary emphasis of this dissertation will be on the remarkable unity and coherence of these works. The narratives reflect what must have been a strong and persistent interest in the boys by Twain. Particular attention will be given to the author's evident continuing concern to have Tom and Huck grow up. Evidence from the stories demonstrate that the maturation of the boys was a major interest of Twain's that remained strong over the years. Reinforcement for this point comes from the original outline for The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, published in 1961 by Hamlin Hill. According to the outline, the projected novel was to cover the following points:

1. Boyhood & youth; 2 y[outh] & early manh[ood]; 3 the Battle of Life in many lands; 4 (age 37 to 40,) return & meet grown babies & toothless old drivelers who were the grandees of his boyhood. The Adored unknown a [illegible] faded old maid & full of rasping, puritanical vinegar piety.⁵

The novel as published covers only the first two points of this outline, but evidence both from the later stories and notes and letters by Twain indicates that the idea of having the boys grow up remained a central concern in his thinking about Huck and Tom. In particular, the lost manuscript of 1902 (written almost thirty years after this outline) seemed to have embodied the final point, Tom's return to the village as an adult and the changes that he finds there.

That the question (and the means) of the maturation of the boys (particularly of Tom) remained a major concern of Twain's

would seem, at the very least, to undermine the common image of Twain as "imprisoned in boyhood"⁶ in his writings. The author's concern with maturation suggests that his attitude towards the place and importance of childhood in an individual's life was more complex than his published works might indicate. Close examination of these later writings shows a surprising emphasis on ideas associated not with childhood, but with the sometimes painful process of growing up. Concepts such as the assumption of responsibility, the collapse of childhood dreams, knowledge of suffering, even human sexuality, play an important role in the narratives. If these elements were indeed a part of Twain's understanding of childhood, they indicate a greater sophistication and maturity in his thought than perhaps can be seen anywhere else in his writings.

A surprising aspect also of these stories, especially for a reader coming to them familiar only with Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer, is their remarkable emphasis on Tom Sawyer at the expense of Huck. As will be discussed later, the portrayal of Tom in the earlier novel is so negative that it seems puzzling, evidence almost of a critical blind spot, for Twain to choose deliberately to focus on Tom rather than Huck, when the latter had provided him not only with the narrative voice but with affirmed values of his greatest novel. However, reasons will be advanced to help explain Twain's perhaps surprising decision to change the emphasis. These reasons provide additional evidence of the complexity of Twain's thinking about

the boys.

The value of this dissertation comes from its bringing to the reader's attention a little-known body of work by a major American author, and discussing this work as a coherent unit. My emphasis on the coherence and unity of this material reflects what I believe to be Twain's intention in writing it. By closely examining these narratives, I hope in the dissertation to shed some light on aspects of Twain's thought, most prominently childhood and maturity, unseen elsewhere in his writings. By discussing all the later Huck and Tom stories together as a coherent whole, I hope to make the reader aware of their dominant position in Twain's imaginative life and of the complexity they reveal of his relationship to his legendary characters, Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer.

NOTES

¹ "Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer among the Indians," "Dough-face," "Tom Sawyer's Gang Plans a Naval Battle," and "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" were published in Walter Blair, ed., Mark Twain's Hannibal, Huck & Tom (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 81-242. "Schoolhouse Hill" was published in William M. Gibson, ed., Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 175-220.

² John C. Gerber, Paul Baender, and Terry Firkin, eds., The Works of Mark Twain, Volume 4: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer; Tom Sawyer Abroad; Tom Sawyer, Detective (Berkeley Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 251-341; 357-414.

³ Bernard DeVoto, Mark Twain at Work (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), pp. 25-44.

⁴ References to "Tom Sawyer's Mystery" are found in letters quoted in Gerber, pp. 346 and 347. Reference to the story of the boys' return is made in a letter from William Dean Howells to Twain in 1902 (Henry Nash Smith and William M. Gibson, eds., Mark Twain-Howells Letters [Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1960], II, 747). It is also mentioned in an autobiographical dictation by Twain in 1906 (Bernard DeVoto, ed., Mark Twain in Eruption [New York: Harper, 1940], p. 199), and in W. D. Howells' memoir My Mark Twain (New York: Harper, 1910, p. 90).

⁵ Hamlin Hill, "The Composition and Structure of Tom Sawyer," American Literature 32 (1961), 386.

⁶ DeVoto, Work, p. 49, n. 1.

CHAPTER I

Critical Perceptions
of the Later Huck and Tom Stories

Criticism of the later narratives about Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer--indeed, even an awareness that these works exist--has been remarkably meagre. Much of what has been written about them suffers, as I have suggested, from serious misunderstandings of Twain's intentions in writing these stories. These comments apply to criticism of both the previously unpublished material and the two published novellas, Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective."

The dearth of critical consideration of the later stories about the boys is surprising, given the vast amount written about the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Very few critics have felt it necessary when discussing those works to pursue Twain's own thoughts about the boys to determine what his conception of them might have been after he completed Huckleberry Finn. Until quite recently, the consensus about this material has been that it represents merely ill-conceived attempts by Twain to write inferior sequels to his masterpiece. The published works, especially, are seen as cheap exploitations of his famous characters, written out of Twain's desperate need for money in the 1890's.

What is particularly curious about this critical blind spot regarding these works is that it was not caused (or,

should not have been) by ignorance of their existence. That Twain continued the story of the boys after Huck's famous decision to "light out for the Territory" was known as soon as Tom Sawyer Abroad was published in 1893 with its deliberate linkage to the earlier novel. Similarly, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," is closely related to Huckleberry Finn in its setting and characters, demonstrating that Twain saw the works as something of a continuing story. If critics did not know of the existence of the other later stories, they might see the two published works as mere aberrations on Twain's part, potboilers written at a time of great financial pressure for the author and not really representing a major creative impulse in his life. Hence, many critics might justifiably have felt no need to pursue this aspect of Twain's writing, believing that there was little to discover.

That Twain wrote a large amount of unpublished material on the two boys has been general knowledge since just after Twain's death in 1910, however. The existence of these narratives, together with the two published stories, should have alerted previous critics to the importance of these characters in Twain's thought over a much longer time than is indicated by the two early novels, Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. Until very recently only two critics, DeVoto in 1942 and Albert E. Stone in 1961, have made even a brief evaluation of this material.

Even the existence of the now-lost "Fifty Years After" manuscript is confirmed in a number of different places.

William Dean Howells mentions this work in his memoir, My Mark Twain, although in such tentative terms as to lead at least one later critic, DeVoto, to doubt that the work ever existed.

Talking about the summer of 1902, which Twain spent at York Harbor, Maine, Howells says,

There, unless my memory has played me one of those constructive tricks that people's memories indulge in, he read me the first chapters of an admirable story. The scene was laid in a Missouri town, and the characters such as he had known in boyhood; but often as I tried to make him own it, he denied having written any such story; it is possible that I dreamed it but I hope the MS will yet be found.¹

He does not say so explicitly, but from this description it seems plain that this is indeed another Huck and Tom story, set in St. Petersburg.

Thirty years later, however, DeVoto said about this work: "Mark once wrote about it to Howells, who thought it promising. I have found no evidence that he ever began to write it--and Howells was wrong."² DeVoto was presumably referring to Howells' rather vague comment above when he dismissed the story in Mark Twain at Work. Yet at this time--1942--at least three other explicit references to the piece had been made.

Albert Bigelow Paine, in his 1912 biography of Twain, says very clearly about this work that it was a "new Huck Finn story,

inspired by [Twain's] trip to Hannibal [in 1902]. It was to have had two parts--Huck and Tom in youth and then their return in old age. He did some chapters quite in the old vein, and wrote to Howells of his plan."³ He then goes on to quote part of a letter of October 20, 1902, from Howells to Clemens, in which the former comments: "It is a great layout; what I shall enjoy most will be the return of the old fellows to the scene, and their tall lying. There is a matchless chance there. I suppose you will put plenty of pegs in, in this prefatory part."

Admittedly, this quotation left unclear how substantial the work actually was or how far Twain carried it. Later critics perhaps surmised that it was only a tentative plan or a brief outline. The part of the letter quoted by Paine might lead to this conclusion. Paine evidently did not have access to the entire letter, which makes plain that a substantial portion of this work had indeed been written. Twain did not merely write to Howells about this idea; he gave or sent what must have been a fairly bulky manuscript to him to read, indicating that the story was carried quite far. DeVoto should have been aware of this, for the letter was published in full by Mildred Howells in her Life in Letters of her father, in 1928. The paragraph quoted by Paine begins: "I have got Huck Finn safe, and will keep it till I come down [to New York], or will send it by express, as you say."⁴ The fact that the manuscript might need to be sent by express demonstrates

that it was fairly lengthy and substantial. If he was familiar with Miss Howells' book, DeVoto should have had no doubt about its identity in spite of her confusing editorial reference to the fragment as "the manuscript of the book" Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.⁵ For DeVoto himself had already edited and published a third reference to the manuscript: Twain's autobiographical dictation on August 30, 1906, where he says that he had carried the narrative as far as 38,000 words, but then destroyed it: "for fear I might someday finish it."⁶

The accumulated weight of this evidence proves--contrary to DeVoto's assertion--that Twain did indeed write at least a substantial part of a story involving the return of the boys to St. Petersburg as adults. Moreover, Howells, at least, admired it. Given DeVoto's familiarity with the Mark Twain papers, his belief that this was not so seems somewhat peculiar. However, there is a curious attitude running throughout his comments on all the later Huck and Tom stories, which can only be described as vehement dislike. DeVoto was the first one to read and evaluate this material and bring it to public attention. But all his remarks about these works so totally deny any literary value to them that to a later reader it seems that he is describing utterly different stories.

For example, of the two major unfinished stories, "Huck and Tom among the Indians" and "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," DeVoto says: "They are weakly imagined, aimless, and rambling, and large parts of the longer one ["Conspiracy"] are from the

irritating no man's land between fiction and extravaganza into which Mark Twain usually strayed when he found that a literary idea would move no farther on its own momentum."⁷ Later on, he denounces "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" in even more wholesale terms:

It is a maze of romance and rank improvisation that is trivial to begin with and speedily becomes disheartening. It is wholly without structure and moves without plan by dint of feverish extemporization which gets more mechanical and improbable as it goes on. It is dull, humorless, without the enchantment of the great originals. Mark's touch is altogether gone from it and, what points most vividly to the truth, even the prose is dead.⁸

DeVoto also comments negatively on two other brief, surviving fragments (published in the Hannibal, Huck & Tom volume as "Doughface" and "Tom Sawyer's Gang plans a Naval Battle"), saying they "are trivial and even perfunctory, and the second ["Naval Battle"] ... is actually painful."⁹ As well, he describes one of the versions of the "Mysterious Stranger" story set in St. Petersburg (presumably "Schoolhouse Hill") as "fumbling and tentative and it frayed out."¹⁰

Personal tastes in literature of course differ, but the unfortunate major consequence of DeVoto's vehement denunciations of these stories was that subsequent Twain scholars have glanced at them only cursorily for the most part, content to honour DeVoto's attitude towards them, or have ignored them entirely. For example, DeLancy Ferguson, in his Mark Twain: Man and

Legend (published in 1943, a year after Mark Twain at Work) mentions the existence of "Huck and Tom among the Indians," but says merely that it "bogged down" and Twain soon abandoned it.¹¹ Gladys Carmen Bellamy, in her Mark Twain as a Literary Artist (1950) virtually ignores all the later stories about the boys. In his 1951 study of Twain and Henry James, Turn West, Turn East, Henry Seidel Canby merely refers to Twain's prolonged interest in the two boys in the "Indians" story and "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy." He offers no comments on these works. In fact, he probably did not even read them, for he calls the "Conspiracy" story "Tom and Huck," the name by which Paine refers to it in his 1912 biography of Twain, presumably Canby's only source.¹²

This same pattern is followed in almost all of the major critical works about Twain during the 1950's and 1960's, with the exception of Albert E. Stone, Jr.'s The Innocent Eye, to be discussed later. Nothing is said of these stories in such thematic studies as Louis J. Budd's Mark Twain: Social Philosopher (1962), James M. Cox's Mark Twain: The Fate of Humour (1966), Pascal Covici's Mark Twain's Humour, Henry Nash Smith's Mark Twain: The Development of a Writer (1962), Roger B. Salomon's Mark Twain and the Image of History (1961), and Robert A. Wiggins' Mark Twain: Jackleg Novelist (1964).¹³

Robert Regan, in his Unpromising Heroes: Mark Twain and his Characters (1966) does acknowledge the continuing interest that Twain had in the boys, commenting intelligently on why

Twain kept returning to St. Petersburg and Huck and Tom: "He was dissatisfied with the terms of the peace they had made at the end of Huckleberry Finn."¹⁴ However, he does not follow this up with what could have been trenchant remarks on how the later stories, particularly "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," embody this idea.

There were other unexploited opportunities at this time for critics to comment on the later Huck and Tom narratives. Edward Wagenknecht's revised edition of Mark Twain: The Man and his Work (1961) comments on Twain's use of sources for the "Indians" story (as well as Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective"), but offers no critical evaluation of the story. Tony Tanner's Reign of Wonder (1965) describes the crucial confrontation between Huck and Tom in "Indians" after the natives have massacred the Mills family, an experience shattering Tom's illusory beliefs in romantic visions of the world. However, he says merely that this "only illustrates an age-old grievance and adds little to Clemens' life-long preoccupation with discrepancies between the idealities of the literature of the official culture and empirical facts."¹⁵

In general, then, one can say that critical appreciation of the later Huck and Tom stories at this time ranged from non-existent to minimal. The only exception was Stone's The Innocent Eye: Childhood in Mark Twain's Imagination, which was published in 1961, coincidentally the same year that Hamlin Hill made public the 1874 outline for The Adventures of Tom

Sawyer, a prospectus demonstrating Twain's interest in carrying his hero through to maturity. Stone makes the first attempt since DeVoto to discuss the later stories critically. Though there are a number of errors and misunderstandings in his comments, his analysis and evaluation of these works is a major step forward from DeVoto's vehement denunciation of them twenty years before.

Stone gives a detailed description of the plot, characters, and probable sources of "Huck and Tom among the Indians," regarding it as "an honest portrayal of life on the plains."¹⁶ He speculates intelligently on the possible reasons why Twain abandoned it, suggesting plot complications caused by young Peggy Mills' abduction and presumed rape (an episode which DeVoto avoids mentioning in his account of the story): "Given Twain's juvenile and family audience and, even more significantly, his personal reticence about sexual matters, one can sense how ... embarrassing these facts about Indian life were."¹⁷

However, Stone believes that the story was written in 1889, regarding it as quite a late Twain work which the author turned quickly away from to concentrate on the innocuous Tom Sawyer Abroad. Stone was evidently unaware of the 1884 letter from Twain to Howells in which he describes writing the story.¹⁸ He may have been misled by the fact that Twain did have the fragment printed on the Paige typesetting machine in 1889. (Curiously, DeVoto knew in 1942 that Twain wrote the "Indians"

story "not long after"¹⁹ finishing Huckleberry Finn, but Stone seems to have ignored this comment.) It is now known that Twain wrote the work just after finishing the earlier novel, presumably in the same wave of creative energy that enabled him to finish Huckleberry Finn after seven years. After the failure of the "Indians" (and the failure of a dramatization of Tom Sawyer written a few months later), Twain made no effort to continue the boys' story for seven years.

Regarding "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," Stone provides a useful and detailed description of the plot as well as some of the notes leading up to the story. He treats the work much more sympathetically than DeVoto, but still calls it "absurd," "morally incoherent," and "disjointed, incomplete, typically Twainian."²⁰ He points out the importance of Tom in the unfolding of the work, even quoting Huck's remark about Tom being "pisoned" by his success in Arkansas in "Tom Sawyer, Detective," but fails to see the importance of Tom's moral education in the work (as, indeed, no Twain scholar has) and the question of maturity in general. As I hope to demonstrate, these ideas are of great significance in the later stories. Ignoring them does make these works seem incoherent and rather pointless.

Nonetheless, in his detailed descriptions of these works (and his comment that "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" is the most interesting boyhood story Mark Twain never finished"²¹), Stone provided subsequent Twain scholars with an important introduction to this material--an introduction which for the most

part has been ignored. In 1966, Eugene McNamara published an article on "Huck and Tom among the Indians,"²² based on a study of the manuscript. It provides quite a detailed description of the events of the fragment, and points out some of the parallels between it and the earlier novel. But McNamara cannot see any theme operating in the work; though he mentions the attack on Fenimore Cooper's Indians, he does not tie this in any way to an attempt to educate Tom Sawyer. As well, he completely misunderstands the significance of the abduction of Jim and Peggy Mills, either as a plot device, or--in the girl's rape--as a possible reason for the story's abandonment. In fact, neither McNamara nor Stone regard this episode as possessing the significance I believe it has. As I will discuss in a later chapter, Twain uses Peggy's abduction and rape to introduce his boyhood heroes to the general subject of human sexuality.

Even after the publication of these works in the Hannibal, Huck & Tom volume in 1969 (and the publication of "Schoolhouse Hill" in the Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts volume in the same year), scholars did not make any attempt to look at this material as a unit or as an important aspect of Twain's writing. Arthur Pettit, in his Mark Twain and the South (1974) comments at great length on another set of hitherto unpublished Twain material, the "Which was the Dream" stories, but says comparatively little about the Huck and Tom material. He looks at "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" only from the point of view of its

portrayal of Jim--considering him to be degraded by Twain in this work--and ignoring completely the importance Jim has in the maturity of Tom Sawyer. Hamlin Hill's God's Fool (1973) mentions both "Conspiracy" and the "Return" story in passing (admittedly, this book is primarily biographical); while William M. Gibson's The Art of Mark Twain (1976) says little about any of the later stories.²³

However, over the past several years, there has been an increasing interest in many of Twain's unpublished works, not merely as failures or as indications of his breakdown as an artist in his last years. In 1976, Paul Delaney published an analytical discussion of the "Indians" story,²⁴ not only describing the work, but making the point that because of Peggy Mills' rape "Huck is ... the possessor of dark sexual knowledge beyond anything he has understood before,"²⁵ and "to a fourteen- or fifteen-year-old boy a knowledge of sexual evil is fundamentally different" from a knowledge of violence.²⁶ He implies that Twain here was indeed exploring new ideas in his boy-books, more mature than anything he had attempted before.

But in talking only about the "Indians" story, Delaney was unable to make any connections between this work and the other later stories involving the boys. William Macnaughton, on the other hand, in his valuable Mark Twain's Last Years as a Writer (1979) concentrates on the last dozen years of Twain's life and comments usefully on "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" and the "Return" story; but Macnaughton is unable to perceive connect-

ions between these works and the earlier stories, such as Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective," as well as "Indians." Macnaughton does regard the "Conspiracy" story sympathetically, though, rebutting DeVoto's comments about the intricacy of the plot. He points out that Tom's unattractive behaviour--his obsessive quest for glory, his callousness and insensitivity--are "central to the book."²⁷ Furthermore, Macnaughton provides important information on the writing of "Conspiracy," "Schoolhouse Hill," and the "Fifty Years After" narrative, and he speculates suggestively on what the latter may have contained.

In addition, Scholom J. Kahn, in Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger: A Study of the Manuscript Texts (1978), comments at some length on the "Schoolhouse Hill" fragment, pointing out that when Twain placed the Mysterious Stranger in St. Petersburg, his problems became "tangled with the complex web of associations represented by Tom and Huck," perhaps contributing to its relatively quick abandonment in favour of a work set far away in Austria.²⁸ Kahn also comments on parallels between "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" and the "Number 44" manuscripts, mentioning that both use the author's experience as a printer--rare in Twain's fiction--and one which he felt ambivalent about.²⁹

Finally, the introduction and notes that Walter Blair and William M. Gibson provide for the Hannibal, Huck & Tom and Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts volumes give much useful infor-

mation on the background, sources, and chronology of these works. For the most part these are descriptive rather than evaluative, though Blair offers critical comments on the stories--even though these comments are sometimes misleading. For example, he observes that "Jim is given so small a role [in the "Indians" story] that one wonders why Mark Twain did not make the slight effort needed to remove him from his first effort,"³⁰ forgetting that it is Jim's abduction (not Peggy Mills') that causes Tom Sawyer to pursue the Indians. Tom's recognition of his responsibility for Jim's plight is crucial to the boy's moral education. But Blair ignores this theme, saying that "Twain never hits upon any significant theme"³¹ in the work. (Within the context of all the later stories, of course, there are a number of important themes.)

Blair also published many of the notes Twain made while working on these stories, including fairly extensive notebook entries for "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy." These notes provide valuable background to Twain's thinking about these works as he outlined and wrote them. In some cases, the notes correct misunderstandings that coloured several critics' comments on Twain's later years.³² The meagreness of critical analysis of the unpublished works and the misunderstandings and errors in what evaluations exist, can perhaps be explained by the relative inaccessibility of this material (at least before their publication in 1969). But even the two published works, Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective," have been given

scant attention over the years. The general assumption has been that they were ill-conceived and hastily written attempts to cash in the popularity of the two earlier novels (and in the case of the "Detective" story, on the popularity of detective fiction in the 1890's) during Twain's time of financial stress.

For example, Maxwell Geismar says, "Tom Sawyer Abroad and Tom Sawyer, Detective ... are very poor juveniles which cause one only to wonder how Clemens could so openly exploit his famous earlier book while debasing the original characters and concepts."³³ In a similar vein, Frank Baldanza calls Tom Sawyer Abroad a "tired book,"³⁴ and regards "Tom Sawyer, Detective" as "highly improbable and melodramatic";³⁵ while Douglas Grant considers most of Twain's later works, including the Huck and Tom stories, mere "potboilers."³⁶

To be sure, it might be regarded as a sign of favour that these critics chose to comment on the novellas, which is more than either James M. Cox or Henry Nash Smith did in their books on Twain. However, Smith had remarked about all the later stories involving the boys earlier, in his article on "Images of Hannibal" (1961) where he says that they all "make the same demonstration. The Lost World really was lost. Adam could not re-enter Paradise, and America in the Gilded Age could not bring back its agrarian past."³⁷

Not all the criticism of these works is dismissive, though. Tom Sawyer Abroad has received its fair share of praise, including DeVoto's comment in the Introduction to the Portable Mark Twain that the story is a "deliberate exploration of the provincial mind and its prejudices, ignorances, assumptions, wisdoms, cunning."³⁸ Robert Wiggins echoes this feeling, when he calls the work "an exploration of the complexities of the primitive mind."³⁹ He goes on to add that the three characters, Huck, Jim and Tom "all share a wide sympathy for their fellow man"⁴⁰--a remark that might strike some readers as slightly puzzling, given the innumerable insults, some of them quite vicious, that Tom Sawyer hurls at his traveling companions during the course of the journey.

Perhaps the most extended and sympathetic analysis of the work occurs in Stone's The Innocent Eye, where he calls Tom Sawyer Abroad "in some respects the most charming and poised of all Mark Twain's works about childhood."⁴¹ He considers the three major characters to be "in personality, speech, and outlook unchanged from their last appearance at Uncle Silas' farm"⁴² at the end of Huckleberry Finn, and believes that in the story important "existential questions"⁴³ are raised, particularly about the difference between "'knowledge and instinct.'" He concludes, "The superiority of instinctual perception over trained intelligence is here vigorously proclaimed; it had merely been suggested before."⁴⁴ His summation is that "Tom Sawyer Abroad represents one of the last times Twain was

able to juggle into significant literary form his antithetical notions of human nature and behavior, of man's place in a universe possibly devoid of meaning."⁴⁵

Stone regards "Tom Sawyer, Detective," however, much less sympathetically. He regards it as "an involved and tedious tale" and "perhaps Twain's poorest short story."⁴⁶ But he also makes some provocative suggestions about the work as possibly a deliberate burlesque of the Sherlock Holmes tales. As well, Stone notes the difference between the portrayal of the Phelps plantation at the end of Huckleberry Finn and its characterization in this work, saying it "has been transformed into a nightmarish feuding-ground.... This destruction of the partly idyllic close of Huckleberry Finn might have been a significant and moving sign of social and spiritual decay if it were forcefully handled."⁴⁷ The implication seems to be that it was an additional failure on Twain's part not to have written the story from this perspective.

Despite his detailed understanding of these works, and the valuable commentary he offers on them, Stone never mentions the questions of maturity and moral education in these works, topics which I see as central to them. Because of this oversight, these stories are for Stone flawed and lacking any kind of unity. He seems to have been unaware of the 1874 outline for Tom Sawyer, or assumed that Twain lost his professed interest in having his boy-hero mature. Without an understanding of this development, as we shall see, much of the importance of

these later stories is missed.

In Court Trials in Mark Twain and Other Essays (1958)⁴⁸, D. M. McKeithan might have made valuable critical evaluations as well as provide background information on Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective." As it is, the book offers useful background material on the sources of the two novellas, but little else. The "Detective" story is also the subject of an essay by J. Christian Bay, "Tom Sawyer, Detective: The Origin of the Plot" (1929),⁴⁹ which provided McKeithan with his information on the work. Bay gives a detailed account of the source for the novella, an 1829 novel by Scandinavian writer Steen Blicher, The Minister of Veilby. Blicher's novel concerns a complicated murder and subsequent trial in Denmark in 1607. Bay, like McKeithan, makes no critical analysis of Twain's narrative.

Important additional background information on Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective" is provided in John C. Gerber's excellent Introduction and notes to the 1980 Iowa-California volume of these stories (included with The Adventures of Tom Sawyer). Gerber discusses, for example, Twain's original plan to make Tom Sawyer Abroad only "the first in a series of volumes in which he would send Huck and Tom and Jim to various parts of the world."⁵⁰ The abiding interest that Twain had in the boys is acknowledged in Gerber's comment.

Gerber also comments astutely on the lost manuscript,

"Tom Sawyer's Mystery," written between Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective." That Twain wrote a fairly substantial portion of this work (at least 10,000 words⁵¹) seems virtually unknown to scholars--Kaplan, for example, never mentions Twain's work on it. The information Gerber uses comes from published volumes of letters for the most part, but they seem to have been overlooked by other critics.

The critical perspective on these works adopted by Gerber, though, is very similar to the predominantly negative points of view of most previous critics. He sums up the narrative sequence of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer to Tom Sawyer Abroad to "Tom Sawyer, Detective" as "culmination, decline, and collapse."⁵² He says almost nothing about the other later works Twain wrote about the boys, and makes no effort to fit them into any kind of coherent pattern. Particularly useful might have been a discussion of parallels between the "Detective" story and the later "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy."

In addition to the critical commentary on the later stories, much of the criticism on the well-known novels, Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, is also valuable for an understanding of them. This is particularly true of the two essays discussing the question of maturity in Tom Sawyer, Blair's "On the Structure of Tom Sawyer" and Hill's "The Composition and Structure of Tom Sawyer."⁵³ The latter, of course, is especially important for its publication of Twain's 1874 outline for the book. Both come to the conclusion that maturity is an im-

portant element of the novel. Even before Hill, however, Barry A. Marks, in "Mark Twain's Hymn of Praise" (1959) had made the same point. He says that the action of the book is explicitly a "process which issues in Tom's maturation."⁵⁴

All of these essays imply that Twain resolved the question of the boy's maturity at the end of the novel; none of them suggests (perhaps because of lack of familiarity with the later stories) that this remained an ongoing concern of the writer's. But even without knowing of the later works, a number of perceptive critics arrived at provocative conclusions regarding Twain's attitude on this point.

For example, in her essay, "Tom Sawyer, Delinquent" (1962) Diana Trilling points out the ambivalence with which Twain regards adulthood in the novel. On the one hand, the characterization of adults in Tom Sawyer is almost uniformly negative on one level (the "ignorant bully" schoolmaster, the "pompous ass" Judge Thatcher, "the Sunday-school superintendent a pious toady");⁵⁵ yet on another level they are capable of remarkable "selflessness," such as in their search for the lost children in the cave. And, as Trilling emphasizes, this involves "no word of reproach"⁵⁶ against Tom once the children are found and the crisis is over. The adults follow a recognized and accepted code of behaviour, about which Twain seems certainly not condemnatory, and "the result is ... a boy like Tom Sawyer who ... in reality has enough conscience for any civilized man."⁵⁷ The implication of Trilling's remarks is that Twain had a conception

of adulthood to which he wished his boy-hero to aspire, one which involved not only responsibility for one's own actions, but also generosity and love. Something of this vision is embodied in the adults of St. Petersburg--at least in Tom Sawyer.

In the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn the question of maturity becomes much more complex, of course, but critics who notice the vast difference between Huck and Tom at the end of the novel are suggesting something of the depth of maturity that the former has attained. For example, Thomas Arthur Gullason considers Tom the "real antagonist" of the book, and says explicitly that at the end "Tom remains the child of the first chapters" while in contrast, Huck has become "the educated, morally responsible person."⁵⁸ Walter Blair echoes these sentiments when he calls Huck at the end of the novel "much more mature,"⁵⁹ implicitly contrasting him with the childish Tom.

Huck's suggested flight from human involvement at the very end of the novel, though, complicates this question immensely. Even though many critics regard it as a very apt conclusion (T. S. Eliot calls it "the only possible concluding sentence"⁶⁰ and Leo Marx regards it as a breakthrough to "truth"⁶¹), it can hardly be regarded as evidence of maturity in a conventional sense. A life of endless, solitary flight cannot be considered a morally responsible reply to the problems of society. In this context, as Marks points out, the ending of Tom Sawyer is far more mature, for in the course of the novel "Tom moves to

an affirmation of social convention in the interests of that highest form of joy which is founded on other-love."⁶² If he flees alone, Huck Finn can hardly be expected to learn this.

Perhaps because he recognized that it is only within the context of society that genuine moral responsibility can be learned, Twain never again had Huck run off alone like this. He chose instead to direct the later stories toward the idea of teaching a boy maturity within the context of conventional social norms. Seen in this light, the ending of Huckleberry Finn becomes more of a dead end than a form of liberation.

The potential dangers of remaining in a state of arrested childhood can be seen best perhaps in the context of Stone's perceptive comment about the ending of A Connecticut Yankee. He says that the massive, violent destruction of the Battle of the Sand Belt reminds an adult "of nothing so much as a small boy's revenge upon a grownup system that has frustrated him."⁶³ As Yankee was the next novel that Twain completed after Huckleberry Finn, this apocalyptic ending implies the negative consequences of trying to remain too long in childhood rather than living life as an adult. Twain perhaps should be admired for discarding this idea in the later Huck and Tom stories, instead of being condemned for giving in to convention.

What criticism and analysis there is of the later Huck and Tom stories, then, has tended until the middle of the 1970's to be superficial, biased and seriously flawed. Overlooking

the topic of maturity as an ongoing concern of Twain's, none of the critics could see any kind of coherent pattern or consistent theme in the stories, and so for them these stories possess little significance. Only within the last few years, as part of the increasing scholarly interest in all of Twain's later unpublished writings--including the "Mysterious Stranger" manuscripts, the "Which was the Dream?" stories, and his "Fables of Man"--have the later Huck and Tom stories been subjected to critical scrutiny, and not yet has a systematic study of all these narratives been undertaken. As Twain's later years have long been regarded as a time of great creative difficulty, a critical analysis of the later Huck and Tom works that shows them to possess undetected significance will have great value in providing a more accurate perception of his abilities and interests during this time.

NOTES

- ¹ Howells, p. 90.
- ² DeVoto, Work, p. 49.
- ³ Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography (New York: Harper, 1912), III, 1181.
- ⁴ Mildred Howells, ed., Life in Letters of William Dean Howells (New York: Doubleday, 1928), II, 162.
- ⁵ In introducing this letter, with its reference to "Huck Finn," Miss Howells states: "Huck Finn was the manuscript of the book." There is no further clarification in the text, and so a reader might assume that for some inexplicable reason, Howells was reading (in 1902) the manuscript of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (published in 1885). Evidently Miss Howells had no understanding of what the story referred to in the letter really was.
- ⁶ DeVoto, Eruption, p. 199.
- ⁷ DeVoto, Work, p. 48.
- ⁸ DeVoto, Work, p. 113.
- ⁹ DeVoto, Work, pp. 48-49.
- ¹⁰ DeVoto, Work, p. 127.
- ¹¹ Delancy Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943), p. 250.
- ¹² Henry Seidel Canby, Turn West, Turn East (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1951), p. 186.
- ¹³ Louis J. Budd, Mark Twain: Social Philosopher (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962); Gladys Carmen Bellamy, Mark Twain as a Literary Artist (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950); James M. Cox, Mark Twain: The Fate of Humour (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966); Pascal Covici, Jr., Mark Twain's Humour: The Image of a World (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1962); Henry Nash Smith, Mark Twain: The Development of a Writer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962); Roger B. Salomon, Mark Twain and the Image of History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961); Robert A. Wiggins, Mark Twain: Jackleg Novelist (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964).

14 Robert Regan, Unpromising Heroes: Mark Twain and his Characters (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), p. 91.

15 Tony Tanner, Reign of Wonder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 175; Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain: The Man and his Work, rev. ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 65.

16 Albert E. Stone, Jr., The Innocent Eye: Childhood in Mark Twain's Imagination (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 180.

17 Stone, p. 179.

18 Smith and Gibson, II, 496.

19 DeVoto, Work, p. 48.

20 Stone, pp. 196, 198, 199.

21 Stone, pp. 198-199.

22 Eugene McNamara, "Huck Lights Out for the Territory: Mark Twain's Unpublished Sequel," University of Windsor Review, 2 (1966), 67-74.

23 Arthur Pettit, Mark Twain and the South (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1974), pp. 164-65; Hamlin Hill, Mark Twain: God's Fool (New York: Harper, 1973); William M. Gibson, The Art of Mark Twain (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).

24 Paul Delaney, "You Can' Go Back to the Raft Ag'in, Huck Honey!": Mark Twain's Western Sequel to Huckleberry Finn," Western American Literature, 11 (1976), 215-229.

25 Delaney, p. 225.

26 Delaney, p. 227.

27 William Macnaughton, Mark Twain's Last Years as a Writer (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1979), p. 116.

28 Scholom J. Kahn, Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger: A Study of the Manuscript Texts (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1978), pp. 44-45.

29 Kahn, p. 210.

³⁰ Walter Blair, "Introduction" to "Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer among the Indians," in Mark Twain's Hannibal, Huck & Tom, p. 90, n. 7.

³¹ Blair, "Introduction," p. 90.

³² For example, in Mark Twain at Work (p. 49, n. 1) DeVoto quotes a note by Twain: "Marion City. Steal skiff. Turning Huck black & sell him." DeVoto comments: "This grotesque idea had appeared in notebook entries many years before. The idea was apparently to threaten Jim with enslavement again and to have Huck wear blackface and substitute for him." Almost without question, Twain's notation is simply another note for the story that would become "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" (though with Tom rather than Huck taking the part of the slave). Yet despite his familiarity with the story, DeVoto did not seem to see the relationship between the two.

In his Reign of Wonder, Tony Tanner makes exactly the same mistake when he comments (p. 183) about Twain's notes for further stories about the boys:

And the last mention of Huck in the notebooks returns again to the never-explored idea of having Tom sell Huck as a nigger: left so tantalizingly unexplained one does not know whether Clemens intended it as a sport, a plot to have some of Tom's special brand of "fun," or whether it might have turned out to be the ultimate betrayal of the outcast by the conformist.

Tanner is evidently unfamiliar with the "Conspiracy" story; otherwise he could hardly regard the idea of one of the boys being sold as a slave as "never explored."

³³ Maxwell Geismar, Mark Twain: An American Prophet (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), pp. 156n-157.

³⁴ Frank Baldanza, Mark Twain: An Introduction and Interpretation (New York: Holt, 1961), p. 120.

³⁵ Baldanza, p. 122.

³⁶ Douglas Grant, Twain (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), p. 97.

³⁷ Henry Nash Smith, "Mark Twain's Images of Hannibal: From St. Petersburg to Eseldorf," Texas Studies in English, 37 (1958), 18.

38 Bernard DeVoto, ed., The Portable Mark Twain (New York: Viking, 1946), p. 32.

39 Robert A. Wiggins, Mark Twain: Jackleg Novelist (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964), p. 103.

40 Wiggins, p. 104.

41 Stone, p. 180.

42 Stone, p. 183.

43 Stone, p. 185.

44 Stone, p. 187

45 Stone, p. 188.

46 Stone, pp. 189-190.

47 Stone, p. 190.

48 D. M. McKeithan, Court Trials in Mark Twain and Other Essays (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958).

49 J. Christian Bay, "Tom Sawyer, Detective: The Origin of the Plot," in William Warner Bishop and Andrew Keough, eds., Essays Offered to Herbert Putnam by his Colleagues and Friends on his Thirtieth Anniversary as Librarian of Congress 5 April 1929 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929), pp. 80-88.

50 John C. Gerber, "Introduction" to Tom Sawyer Abroad, in Gerber et al, eds., Works of Mark Twain, p. 245.

51 "I am making good progress with 'Tom Sawyer's Mystery,' for I have written 10,000 words." Letter from Twain to Livy Clemens, November 6, 1893; quoted in Gerber et al, p. 347.

52 Gerber et al, p. ix.

53 Walter Blair, "On the Structure of Tom Sawyer, Modern Philology, 37 (1939), 75-88; Hill, pp. 379-92.

54 Barry A. Marks, "Mark Twain's Hymn of Praise," English Journal, 48 (1959), 44.

55 Diana Trilling, "Tom Sawyer, Delinquent," in her Claremont Essays (London: Secker and Warburg, 1965), p. 146.

56 Trilling, p. 147.

57 Trilling, p. 149.

58 Thomas Arthur Gullason, "The 'Fatal' Ending of Huckleberry Finn," American Literature, 29 (1957), 90.

59 Walter Blair, Mark Twain and Huck Finn (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960), p. 76. More recently, the immaturity of Tom has been discussed by Judith Fetterly in her article, "Disenchantment: Tom Sawyer in Huckleberry Finn," PMLA, 87 (1972), 69-74, where she claims that by the time Twain came to the end of the novel, he had "become disenchanted with his boy-hero" (p. 69). Anna Mary Wells, in a letter to the journal (PMLA, 87 [1972], 1130-31), responded by arguing that by the end of the novel, "it may be that Tom also has grown up." She agrees that for Huck, his famous "go to hell" speech is indeed a moment of "coming of age."

60 T. S. Eliot, "Introduction" to the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (London: Cresset Press, 1950), p. xvi.

61 Leo Marx, "Mr. Eliot, Mr. Trilling, and Huckleberry Finn," American Scholar, 22 (1953), 439.

62 Marks, p. 44.

63 Stone, p. 168.

CHAPTER II

History of the Composition
of the Later Huck and Tom Stories

Twain's stories about Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer emerged out of an interest in children that existed virtually from the very beginning of his career as a professional writer. In this chapter, I shall trace the development of his use of child-characters in his fiction, and give a chronological account of the writing of all the works involving Tom and Huck.

Though children appear in Twain's earliest writings, his interest in them at first was quite limited. As Albert E. Stone has pointed out, his earliest use of children in his writings was primarily as "instruments of social criticism."¹ It is in this role that the boy characters in such early pieces as "Those Blasted Children" (1867), "The Story of the Bad Little Boy" (1865), and "The Story of the Good Little Boy" (1870) appear.

These are satiric works, and in fact the two "Little Boy" stories are deliberate inversions of the traditional children's fiction of the time, in which virtue is rewarded and evil punished. In the earlier story, "The Bad Little Boy," the hero Jim engages in all the petty mischief of a young boy--stealing jam and apples, going boating on a Sunday--and yet suffers no evil consequences, contrary to the expectations that traditional

literature would have raised. As the narrator remarks, in a tone of mock wonder, "Nothing like it in any of the Sunday School books."² In fact, at the end of the story, Jim--despite his transgressions--"is the infernaled wickedest scoundrel in his native village, and is universally respected, and belongs to the legislature."³

The satiric point in this and other similar stories is fairly obvious, though not without humour. In fact, this same tendency to satirize his boy-heroes carries over to a work as late as Tom Sawyer, as several critics have noticed,⁴ with much the same humour and the same object. What is noticeable in these works as well, though, is the realism with which the boys are depicted--as Stone says, they are "boisterously natural."⁵ For example, in the "Bad Little Boy" story, Jim steals jam from the pantry and replaces it with tar, remarking, "the old lady would get up and snort"⁶ when the crime was discovered--a colourful, as well as natural and humorous observation.

The main ingredients for the Huck and Tom stories, then, would seem to have been present in Twain's mind almost from the very beginning of his writing career--an interest in children, and a concern to present them as accurately as possible. But it was not until the discovery of the "matter of Hannibal" (in Henry Nash Smith's phrase⁷) that the true development of these characters and their milieu began to occur. This was perhaps precipitated by Twain's marriage to Olivia Langdon of Elmira,

New York, on February 2, 1870; for only four days later Twain wrote his famous "fountains of the great deep" letter to his childhood friend, Will Bowen, in which he enumerates a great many of the youthful experiences they had shared. As Stone points out,⁸ many of the episodes mentioned in the letter reappear in the Huck and Tom stories. These include a portrayal of Jimmy Finn as town drunkard, scenes of "undressing and playing Robin Hood in our shirt-tails," "swimming above the still-house branch," "vagrant fishing excursions," the shooting by Owsley of Smarr, and several incidents that appear in the last stories about the boys, written almost thirty years later, such as Sam Clemens purposely catching measles from Will ("Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy"--1897) and Henry Beebe's "envied slaughter-house" ("Schoolhouse Hill"--1898).⁹

An indication of the importance of Twain's marriage to his attitude towards his childhood experience may be seen in the fact that his earlier communications to Will Bowen contain no trace of anything more than casual interest in their shared experiences. For example, in a letter of May, 1866, he mentions only in passing, "I have seen a fellow here [in Hawaii] that you and I knew in Hannibal in childhood--named Martin--he was a carpenter."¹⁰ It seems evident that it was only after he had "rained reminiscences for four & twenty hours"¹¹ on his new bride in February, 1870 (prompted, evidently, by a letter from Will) that Twain began to be aware of the power of his childhood experiences to interest--in fact, even enthrall--other

people.

The importance of Livy Clemens in Twain's creative use of his own past, is perhaps best described by Justin Kaplan:

She is a flesh-and-blood wife, but she is also a guiding principle, a symbolic figure he invests with its own power to select and purify. She has become an idealized superego which frees him from the taint of adolescent experiments and frontier lawlessness and allows him to experience a productive tension between the social order he has become a part of and the boyhood reality he can never leave behind him.¹²

It is out of the "productive tension" between these various forces that the Huck and Tom stories were created.

The first fruit of this discovery by Twain of the creative possibilities of his childhood may, in fact, have come very shortly after his marriage, though there is some uncertainty about the date. The earliest surviving work in which can be seen a recognizable Tom Sawyer-like character is a fragmentary story known now as the "Boy's Manuscript," which, according to Albert Bigelow Paine, may very well have been written "about 1870."¹³ It seems definitely to have been, as Bernard DeVoto comments, "the earliest attempt to use the material of Tom Sawyer,"¹⁴ in any event.

Despite its many flaws, this work is a crucial one in the development of the world of Huck and Tom. DeVoto discusses it at some length in his essay, "The Phantasy of Boyhood," where

he sums it up quite accurately:

The sketch is certainly the embryo of Tom Sawyer--but it is Tom Sawyer untouched by greatness, and Tom Sawyer without body-snatching and midnight murder, without Jackson's Island, without the cave, without Huck Finn. It is crude and trivial, false in sentiment, clumsily farcical, an experiment in burlesque with all its standards mixed.¹⁵

The similarities with the later novel, though, are quite striking in the "Boy's Manuscript," extending even to the names of characters. The hero is called Billy Rogers--who will become Ben Rogers, while a Bob Sawyer appears briefly. In the "Manuscript," Amy Lawrence is the girl for whom young Billy yearns; in Tom Sawyer she is the girl Tom abandons in favour of Becky Thatcher.

In addition, there are quite clear elements of autobiography in the fragment, indicating that Twain was consciously experimenting with the events of his own childhood as a source for interesting fiction. Bill Bowen appears in the story under his own name (he becomes Joe Harper in Tom Sawyer) and there is a detailed account of the battle of the tick in the schoolroom (which reappears in chapter seven of Tom Sawyer) to which Twain appends the footnote: "Every detail of the above incident is strictly true, as I have excellent reason to remember."¹⁶

However, the satiric impulse died hard in Twain, and in the "Boy's Manuscript," it detracts from the realistic portraits

of a young boy. Most of the story concerns the agonies of young Billy's tortured relationship with little Amy Lawrence; at the end of the "Manuscript," Billy has broken off with Amy, evidently irrevocably, but he has found a new "girl that is my doom. I shall die if I cannot get her."¹⁷ This girl, however, is 19 years old, and from the text clearly has no interest in little Billy, so the perhaps cruel comic possibilities of the situation are evident.

As well, there is a persistent if gentle satire of childhood's naivety in the presentation of the relationship between Amy and Billy, particularly in the episode where they plan out their future life together: "As soon as ever we grow up we'll be married, and I am to be a pirate and she'd to keep a milliner's shop. Oh, it is splendid."¹⁸ The obvious incongruity of the two careers (as well as the improbability of becoming a pirate) is, of course, totally lost on the two children, and touching to the adult reader.

The satire in this story, in which young Billy is not only the instrument of humour but also the object of it, reflects an evident confusion in the author's mind over exactly what his theme or target was, as well as over its intended audience--a problem that will reappear with The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Still, in the "Manuscript," Twain made his first attempt at an extended account of a child's perception of the world and of his experiences in it. He uses, at least partially,

a convincing presentation and genuinely attempts to convey the texture of a small boy's mind and feelings. As well, in its use of Twain's own childhood experiences, the story represents a major step in the creative process that would lead to the Huck and Tom works.

The next stage in the development of the work of Huck and Tom may be considered that of The Gilded Age, the collaboration between Twain and his Hartford neighbour Charles Dudley Warner in 1873. The book served to impress further upon Twain the creative fund of his childhood memories and the satisfaction and practicality of exploiting them.

The Gilded Age was written for an adult audience, for it is concerned primarily with the greed, corruption, and abuses of power in the society of the 1870's. However, in it Twain utilizes childhood and in fact draws heavily from his own family background, in such details as the Tennessee land and the Hawkins family move to Missouri. Laura Hawkins, the heroine, is named after Twain's early sweetheart in Hannibal, as he mentions in a letter to Will Bowen.¹⁹ Further, the work's most famous character, Colonel Sellers, is based on Twain's cousin, James Lambton.²⁰ Other parallels, as Frank Baldanza points out, include the portrait of Judge Hawkins, "precisely the picture we have of [Twain's father] Judge Clemens in the Autobiography" and "the splendid portrait of Orion Clemens ... in the character of Washington Hawkins." In the early part of the novel, there

is even some use of Twain's own youthful experience on the Mississippi: "Clemens used his own river experience ... in the description of the steamboat race and the explosion of the Aramanth patterned after the destruction of the Pennsylvania in which Sam's brother, Henry, died."²¹

The Gilded Age, then, though not a work for children and not primarily concerned with childhood, is a major step in Twain's use of his own past that would lead to the development of the Huck and Tom stories. It also introduces a number of major themes that will reappear in the later boy stories. There is the boredom and banality of small-town life, in the presentation of the hamlet of Obedstown, Tennessee at the beginning of the novel. There is unease at the corrupting power of wealth,²² and there is even an element of misanthropy, such as in the description of the jurors at Laura Hawkins' trial: "some had a look of animal cunning, while the most were only stupid. The entire panel formed that boasted heritage commonly described as the 'bulwark of our liberties.'"²³

In its presentation of slave characters, The Gilded Age enabled Twain to begin mining a rich source of creative expression which would receive its highest form in the presentation of Nigger Jim in the later Huck and Tom stories. In The Gilded Age, the realistic and sympathetic portrayal of such characters as Uncle Dan'l can be seen as the first fruit of this new interest. It led in 1874 to Twain's moving portrait

of the slave Auntie Rachel in "A True Story"; and ultimately his concern for slave characters would provide a significant element of the Huck and Tom stories.

With The Gilded Age, then, Twain continued and intensified the necessary exploration both of the techniques of writing fiction and the uses of his own past as a source for stories that would lead to his masterpieces. The same intense creative forces in Twain that gave birth to the "Boy's Manuscript" and the childhood episodes of The Gilded Age were still operating when Twain began to write The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, and these forces can all be seen first in his "fountains of the great deep" letter to Will Bowen of February 6, 1870.

According to DeVoto, Twain "began writing [Tom Sawyer] as we know it in 1873 or 1874 (on the whole, the latter seems the likelier year),"²⁴ and Justin Kaplan concurs.²⁵ It is certain that Twain had already written at least part of the novel by the end of the summer of 1874, only a year after The Gilded Age, for a letter to Dr. John Brown proving this is dated September 4 of that year.²⁶

A crucial event occurred in that summer of 1874, one that affected all the later works about Huck and Tom. In fact, it might be said to have provided the basis for Twain's continued interest in and concern for Tom Sawyer for the next thirty years. He wrote an outline--first discussed by Hamlin Hill--of his projected work, listing the major areas to be covered in it:

1. Boyhood and youth; 2 y [outh] & early manh [ood]; 3 the Battle of Life in many lands; 4 (age 37 to [40?],) return & meet grown babies & toothless old drivellers who were the grandees of his boyhood. The Adored Unknown a [illegible] faded old maid & full of rasping, puritanical vinegar piety.²⁷

A full understanding of this outline is vital to comprehending the subsequent stories about Tom. Two points immediately stand out to anyone familiar with these stories. First, Twain wanted Tom Sawyer to grow up in the course of the projected novel. Secondly, this does not happen in the course of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer--but as will be discussed later on in this dissertation, Twain did not abandon this central idea.

According to Hamlin Hill, Twain came extremely close to following this plan in the original Tom Sawyer. Hill suggests that this outline was written very early in the composition of the work--"if not before he began the book, before he reached page 169 of his manuscript. Before that page, the 'new girl' was referred to as 'the Adored Unknown' (Chapter III of the published book). On that page the name 'Becky Thatcher' appeared for the first time (Chapter VI). If Becky had been 'christened' when Twain wrote this outline, it seems likely that he would have used her name in it." The outline must have served, therefore, as Twain's basic guide as he was working on the early chapters. As Hill says, if Twain had followed the outline, the book would have been "in four parts, clearly pro-

gressing from boyhood to maturity and ending with Tom's return to St. Petersburg and a puritanical Becky."²⁸

The moment when the book changed seems to have come in the Jackson's Island episode. Hill makes a very convincing case that Twain's original intention here was to have Tom Sawyer flee from both St. Petersburg and his companions, Huck Finn and Joe Harper, to start the "Battle of Life in many lands." Twain's manuscript "shows that he pondered the wisdom of having Tom depart. Aware that a critical point in the story was at hand, he sprinkled the page with signs of his indecision."²⁹ This may, in fact, have been the point to which Twain referred years later when he said, "At page 400 of my manuscript the story made a sudden and determined halt and refused to proceed another step."³⁰

If this is so, when he returned to the story Twain may have made the decision to keep Tom's story for the moment in St. Petersburg, and concentrate only on the first point in his outline. Hill concludes, perhaps prematurely, "Whether from expediency, indifference, or, most likely, the realization that Tom Sawyer was not the boy to send off on the 'Battle of Life in many lands,' Twain decided not to start Tom's journeying."³¹

There is further evidence, however, that Twain was still not satisfied or even fully decided on the scope of Tom's story, even as late as the summer of 1875. An exchange of letters in June and July of that year between Twain and William Dean

Howells indicates that Twain was still undecided about where he wanted his story to go. On June 21, after Howells had made some evidently significant comments on the work in progress, Twain wrote him a letter which suggests he still had the outline of the previous summer very much in his mind: "Since there is no plot to the thing, it is likely to follow its own drift, & so is as likely to drift into manhood as anywhere--I won't interpose" (emphasis added).³²

Howells responded on July 3, fully supporting the notion: "don't waste it [the story] on a boy, and don't hurry the writing for the sake of making a book. Take your time and deliberately advertise it by Atlantic publication."³³ But on July 5, Twain replied rather unexpectedly (contrary to his letter of June 21): "I have finished the story & didn't take the chap beyond boyhood. I believe it would be fatal to do it in any shape but autobiographically." (By "autobiographically," Twain presumably means writing it in the first-person.) Yet despite this sudden abandonment of the original outline, Twain's conception of the novel remained the same as Howells'. It was a story aimed at adults, hence quite suitable for publication in Howells' Atlantic Monthly: "It is not a boy's book, at all. It will only be read by adults. It is only written for adults."³⁴

This point is significant, for it gives some indication of how Twain conceived of the novel when he first completed it:

as a book about childhood, but written from an adult's point of view, and of interest primarily to adults. This follows Howells' conception, as expressed in his letter of July 3 and (presumably) in the comments Howells made to Twain about the story prior to the latter's June 21 letter. In fact, Howells' insistence on this point may indicate that while working on it in the spring of 1875, Twain had suddenly begun to regard it as a book only about childhood, contrary to the 1874 outline, and that it was only after this exchange of letters that he changed his mind again and considered carrying his hero into adulthood.

Whether Twain changed his mind once or twice, however, we must notice the remarkable degree of ambivalence he felt about the book's scope and its intended audience. Understanding his ambivalence is difficult, because it is not clear what kind of story either Howells or Twain regarded as suitable for a particular audience. Originally Twain may have felt that only a Bildungsroman, tracing a boy's growing into maturity would be of interest to an adult audience and planned his story in 1874 on that basis. But he may have temporarily abandoned this idea, for some unknown reason, by the spring of 1875, deciding to write a book only about childhood for children. Then, after his conversations with Howells in June, 1875, he may have changed his mind once more, returning to his original plan of carrying the boy through adulthood, a plot suitable once again for an adult audience. This would have prompted the exchange of

letters at the end of June. Again for unknown reasons (perhaps he suddenly did not wish to face bringing Tom to adulthood), he reverted to the childhood scope of the story, but protested at the same time that despite this change it was still "only written for adults."

It seems evident that this ambivalence characterized Twain's attitude towards Huck and Tom long after he had finished the novel. That the original 1874 outline was still in his mind even after he completed Tom Sawyer is shown by a further comment in his July 5 letter to Howells: "By & by I shall take a boy of twelve & run him on through life (in the first person) but not Tom Sawyer--he would not be a good character for it."³⁵ This, as critics have long noted, was the germ of Huckleberry Finn.³⁶ But perhaps too much has been read into this remark. Twain may be saying not that Tom Sawyer would be a poor character to run through life, but merely that he would be a poor character to develop thus in the first person. Evidence to support this idea comes from the fact that, as DeVoto has pointed out, originally the novel was written in the first person (as was the "Boy's Manuscript"), though Twain subsequently changed it: the author "actually did begin to write the book in the first person--the form established by [the "Manuscript"] endured that long. . . . [The] manuscript contains one vestigial page from an earlier beginning. . . . And all down the page the I of the narrative has been crossed out and he has been substituted. . . . It was a wise change."³⁷

Admittedly, Twain remarked in the letter of July 5 rather mysteriously that if he took Tom "into manhood, he would be just like all the one horse men in literature and the reader would conceive a hearty contempt for him."³⁸ But the fact that all the later works about the boys are centred on Tom indicates that the plan of the original outline, to recount Tom's growing up, stayed with Twain until the end of his career. (Huckleberry Finn, the exception, of course embodies at least partially Twain's desire to run a boy through life "in the first person.") The "Fifty Years After" manuscript of the early 1900's, which seems not to have survived, reinforces the idea that Twain maintained an interest in following the outline, for it was evidently a story of the boy's return to the village after an absence of half a century. Therefore, Twain's objections to Tom's suitability for maturity must have been only temporary.

The question of Twain's conception of his story at this time is further confused by what occurred when Howells finally read the manuscript completed by Twain in July of 1875. Howells did not read it until November of that year, and the sudden, marked reversal in Howells' perception of the work calls into question his understanding of it (and Twain's) when the two writers discussed it and corresponded about it in the spring of 1875. On November 21, Howells wrote: "It is altogether the best boy's story I ever read.... But I think you ought to treat it explicitly as a boy's story. Grown-ups will enjoy it just as much if you do; and if you should put it forth as a study of

boy character from the grown-up point of view, you'd give the wrong key to it."³⁹ This contradicts absolutely his comments in his letter of July 3; but once again Twain followed his lead, replying to Howells on November 23: "Mrs. Clemens decides with you that the book should issue as a book for boys, pure & simple--& so do I. It is surely the correct idea."⁴⁰ But even this exchange of letters did not end the matter in Twain's mind. On January 18, 1876, he wrote Howells regarding the use of the word "hell" in the novel: "Since the books is now professedly & confessedly a boy's & girl's book, that dern word bothers me some nights, but it never did until I had ceased to regard the volume as being for adults."⁴¹ (This last comment comes despite his account earlier in the letter of having "long ago" checked the use of the word with both Mrs. Clemens and her mother and aunt--indicating the degree of Twain's discomfort with it.) Howells replied that he would "have that swearing out in an instant.... It won't do for the children."⁴² And in the published novel, the "hell" has become "thunder."⁴³

The fact that Twain remained uneasy for so many months about the intended audience of his novel (and hence about its scope and purpose) suggests that he had not reconciled himself to abandoning the original outline and writing a book just for children. (All his previous works, after all, had been directed at an adult audience.) His comment about the book that would become Huckleberry Finn, that he would run the boy "on through life," supports the idea that he had not abandoned the original

outline. If Hamlin Hill's hypotheses about the abrupt change in plans for Tom Sawyer are correct, it reinforces the point, for Huck's sudden flight down the river on the raft has obvious similarities to what may have been Tom's plan to flee down the river from Jackson's Island (with the townspeople believing he is dead, as Hill points out⁴⁴) after making elaborate preparations and leaving his valuables with his friends. It was less than two years later that Twain wrote the opening chapters of Huckleberry Finn and quite possibly his original conception for Tom's "Battle of Life" may have been at the back of his mind as he wrote out the preparations that Huck made for his.

Even in the published novel, there are still indications that the idea of maturation and manhood was very close to the surface in Twain's thinking about Tom. The "Conclusion" to the novel states quite explicitly that "the story could not go much further without becoming the history of a man."⁴⁵ And we recall that at the end of Tom Sawyer his surrogate father⁴⁶ Judge Thatcher is planning an admirable adult career for the boy: "He meant to look to it that Tom should be admitted to the National Military Academy and afterward trained in the best law school in the country, in order that he might be ready for either career or both."⁴⁷ This would indicate that at the end of Tom Sawyer Twain had tried to resolve the problem of the boy's maturation and manhood satisfactorily; and Hill's analysis of Twain's revisions to the manuscript that indicate he "was working with the deliberate intention of showing Tom's maturation"⁴⁸ support

this point.

Yet Twain continued to write further works about the boy--none of which mention anything more about a career in law or the military. A reason can be advanced to explain this change in focus. Twain may have realized after finishing Tom Sawyer that the problem of an individual's coming of age involved something far more complex than parental approbation and careful career plans. Paradoxically, evidence of such a realization by Twain comes from the next work he wrote about the boys--the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn--despite the relative absence of Tom in it.

Twain began writing Huckleberry Finn in the summer of 1876, almost as soon as he had finished with Tom Sawyer. There were many elements in the earlier work that made continuing the story an easy decision. In fact, in the published Conclusion to the novel, Twain had commented explicitly, "Some day it may seem worthwhile to take up the story of the younger ones again and see what sort of men and women they turned out to be."⁴⁹ As well, as DeVoto comments, the possibility of Huck's Pap returning to the village (mentioned in Chapter 25 of Tom Sawyer) was a potentially interesting plot element: "The original impetus that launched Mark's masterpiece seems to have been that possibility plus the chance he saw to burlesque once more a species of romantic fiction."⁵⁰ This, combined with his renewed interest in telling a story from the first-person point of view

(returning to the form of the "Boy's Manuscript") must have made the decision a simple one.

The opening of the new novel makes explicit the connection to the earlier one: "You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,' but that ain't no matter."⁵¹ Huck, the narrator, then goes on to give a brief summary of the closing events of that work and how they are related to his present situation, but after this almost immediately embarks on new material, an account of his life with the Widow Douglas, which may have been excised from the published version of Tom Sawyer.⁵²

Almost immediately--within a month, according to a letter to Howells of August 9, 1876⁵³--problems arose, and despite the quick and easy beginning, it was not, of course, until seven years later that the work was completed. Much has been written on this hiatus, most notably Walter Blair's Mark Twain and Huckleberry Finn⁵⁴ and DeVoto's essay Noon and Dark,⁵⁵ to which the reader is referred for extensive commentary on these problems. What is most noteworthy--and paradoxical--from the point of view of this dissertation is the undisputed fact that the elements that make Huckleberry Finn a "masterpiece" are those contained in the section of the novel in which Tom Sawyer is noticeably absent. As DeVoto says about the beginning, "the original 'idea' for Huckleberry Finn was little more than a continuation of Tom Sawyer.... But there is no dynamic purpose in

this scheme, no particular course of action which would make the core of a book. Tom Sawyer's Gang [the major plot element in the early chapters] proved to be pretty feeble stuff."⁵⁶ Similar and more critical comments have been made quite justifiably about the ending of the novel, Tom's grand Evasion; and even a dedicated partisan of the boy must admit that there are times in the book he becomes quite tiresome.

Yet despite the creation of a masterpiece in the account of Huck's journeying without Tom, despite the obvious success of the idiomatic first-person narration by Huck, despite Twain's giving himself a brilliant opening for a potential sequel in Huck's final comment in the novel ("I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest"),⁵⁷ Twain never allowed Huck to go off on his own again. All the subsequent stories about the boys are focussed on Tom, and Huck merely acts as a narrative instrument for telling each story.

The appeal that Tom Sawyer had for Twain--even greater than that of Huck--was a complex one, summed up best perhaps by Stone when he says, "The boy's combination of imagination, self-dramatization, and common sense was, after all, a part of Twain himself and could never be wholly derided. Indeed, he liked Tom and reproduced his essential characteristics in many guises--in Tom Canty, in Hank Morgan, in Pudd'nhead Wilson, and in several minor personages of the travel books."⁵⁸ Indeed, when one looks at Twain's own life, it would seem that the Tom

Sawyer elements of his personality were by far the dominant ones. His extravagant house in Hartford is a case in point: "\$70,000 worth of turrets and balconies housing \$21,000 worth of furniture and perched on a five-acre \$31,000 tract of land, Nook Farm's ... gaudiest landmark."⁵⁹ Then there are his extensive travels with a large entourage, his endless monologues, even his white linen suits. All served to attract attention in ways Tom Sawyer would have admired.

But more important than this from a literary point of view is the fact that Huck suffers from two basic weaknesses as a character which Tom does not share: he is extraordinarily passive, and he is an outsider to society. What made these aspects of Huck so difficult to utilize in the later stories are, I believe, several important discoveries that Twain made in the long course of writing Huckleberry Finn, discoveries about the nature of evil, the role of the individual in society, the dilemma of love versus responsibility, and even about adolescent sexuality. These will be discussed at greater length in a subsequent section; for the moment it can be hypothesized that at the end of Huckleberry Finn, Twain found himself confronted with an extraordinary artistic dilemma. He was burdened with a character who, because of limitations in the way he had been originally conceived and presented, could no longer adequately embody or confront the complex issues Twain wished to explore. Yet at the same time, Huck's fictional voice Twain found congenial. The author may have realized that Huck could be used

to present the issues, but the focus of them would be on the original subject of the stories, Tom Sawyer. A major element of the later works about the boys is a repeated attempt to resolve this problem satisfactorily.

It is interesting to note in this regard that Twain evidently found it quite easy, at least at first, to continue the story of Tom and Huck immediately after finishing Huckleberry Finn. Evidence indicates that he began a sequel to the novel in the summer of 1884, before Huckleberry Finn was even published, and while he was still reading proofs of that novel.⁶⁰ This immediate continuation of the story may have been helped by the fact that there seems to have been no confusion or uncertainty in Twain's mind over the new book's intended audience.⁶¹

The ease with which Twain continued the saga of Huck and Tom indicates that he found the combination of Huck's narrative voice and a plot focus on Tom very congenial. At the same time, he was able to use this combination to explore some significant ideas. "Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer among the Indians," the sequel to Huckleberry Finn that Twain began to write in the summer of 1884, illustrates the author's exploration of several of the themes that he had discovered in the course of writing Huckleberry Finn. Among them are the intrinsic evil of slavery, the boredom of everyday life, and the hypocrisy of people. In addition to these, though, he also begins to examine others as well, particularly (to return to the 1874 outline) the problem

of a boy's growing up. In the exploration of this question especially, the evil of slavery and the dehumanization of the black man were discovered to be of vital importance.

One of the major concerns of the "Indians" story can be seen as the need to give Tom a lesson in moral education and responsibility--a vital part of the process of becoming a man--through the agency of Jim, whom the boy had treated so callously in the last ten chapters of Huckleberry Finn. Thus, the kidnapping of Jim is an important element in the fragment. Tom wishes to pursue the Indians who did it to find Jim. He says explicitly, "I got Jim into this scrape, and so of course I ain't going to turn back towards home till I've got him out of it again."⁶² His attitude can be contrasted to Huck's, whose major interest in their pursuit of the Indians is finding seventeen year-old Peggy Mills--despite the close, almost filial bond he and the slave had developed during the journey down the river.

Unfortunately, for reasons which will be discussed later, "Huck and Tom among the Indians" did not turn out to be a suitable vehicle for exploring the topic of Tom's maturation, and the story was abandoned within a few weeks after he started with less than nine chapters written. His failure to complete this story, despite its many potential themes and plot developments, may have contributed to Twain's evident abandonment of all things concerned with Tom and Huck for several years; be-

tween 1884 and 1890 there are no comments or notes about the boys in any surviving letters or notebooks. Also, Twain may have found himself tired and stale after dealing so extensively with his boy characters in the year preceding this period: between the summers of 1883 and 1884, Twain finished Huckleberry Finn (after seven years of trying), completed a four-act play based on the novel Tom Sawyer in the winter of that year, read proofs and arranged for the publication of Huckleberry Finn in the spring, and in the summer of 1884, planned and wrote the 20,000 word fragment we have been discussing.

Twain may have returned to the boys briefly in 1888 or 1889, but only so far as to have the incomplete "Indians" fragment set up and run off as an experiment on the Paige typesetting machine in which he had invested so heavily.⁶³ But this period was one of the least productive--literarily--in Twain's life (he published no major work between Huckleberry Finn in 1885 and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court in 1889). It is not surprising, perhaps, that after the failure of "Indians," Huck and Tom should have been temporarily jettisoned in Twain's mind by the Yankee on the one hand and the Paige typesetting machine on the other. But it is worth speculating that this fallow period may suggest the importance to Twain's imagination of the boy characters and the problems of their maturation which had temporarily defeated him.

In the early 1890's, however, Twain returned to the boys (as well as other characters from earlier works) with a venge-

ance, perhaps prompted by his desperate need for money after the collapse of both his investment scheme for the typesetter and his publishing house, Charles L. Webster & Co. But the tone of his references to the boys was now vastly different from that of several years earlier. A fairly lengthy note in the spring of 1891 states:

Huck comes back 60 years old, from nobody knows where--& crazy. Thinks he is a boy again, & scans always every face for Tom & Becky &c.

Tom comes, at last, 60 from wandering the world & tends Huck, & together they talk of old times; both are desolate, life has been a failure, all that was lovable, all that was beautiful is under the mould. They die together.⁶⁴

Another note shortly thereafter repeats this idea: "Tom & Huck die."⁶⁵

Where the emphasis was now on life's defeats, it had earlier been on life's possibilities. In Twain's notes for further sequels to Huckleberry Finn written just after completing the novel in 1884 we find: "Continue Tom and Huck. Put more of Sid the mean boy in," "Make a kind of Huck Finn narrative on a boat--let him ship as Cabin boy and another boy as a cub pilot," "Put Huck and Tom and Jim through my Mo. campaign."⁶⁶ All have a certain vitality and might possibly have made quite interesting fiction.

But the idea of the return to the village as adults had been present in Twain's mind ever since the 1874 outline, of

course, when he planned to return his hero to the town at "age 37 to (40?)"--interestingly, roughly his own age when he wrote this--and the idea was repeated in a synopsis for a play based on the novel Tom Sawyer that Twain copyrighted in July, 1875: "FIFTY YEARS LATER.--Ovation to General Sawyer, Rear-Admiral Harper, Bishop Finn, and Inspector Sid Sawyer, the celebrated detective."⁶⁷

As Walter Blair comments, this synopsis was probably "written before the play was,"⁶⁸ and in fact the version of the play that Twain did write in the winter of 1884-85 contains no hint of a return to the village years later. However, the brief comment in this synopsis provides a suggestive illumination of what Twain thought of his characters, and what kind of adults they would be, still at the beginning of what would become the Huck and Tom saga. "General Sawyer," is of course appropriate if Tom followed the career suggested for him by Judge Thatcher at the end of Tom Sawyer, entering the National Military Academy; "Rear-Admiral Harper" may be suggested by Joe's evident leadership shown by his rank of General in the boys' army in the novel, combined with his taste for aquatic adventures in the Jackson's Island episode; "Bishop Finn" may be seen as an interesting anticipation of Huck's straightforward morality channeled into more conventional social forms than would be possible for Twain to envision for the boy after having developed Huck's determined disaffiliation from society in Huckleberry Finn. The transmutation of the hateful Sid into

"the celebrated detective" may be a reflection of Twain's own lifelong amused contempt for police, as evidenced in such works as "The Stolen White Elephant" (1882) and "A Double-Barrelled Detective Story" (1902).

Curiously, the return of the boys in the synopsis "fifty years later" would mean that they would be the same age, roughly, as that of Tom and Huck in the later, lugubrious notes of 1891--about 60, and the difference in their fates shows quite markedly the difference in Twain's feelings between 1875 and 1891. However, the author seems never to have even begun a story about the boys incorporating the mournful attitude of the 1891 notes, and when, shortly afterwards, he began a sequel to Huckleberry Finn, it shows no trace of this despairing outlook.

This sequel, which became the novella Tom Sawyer Abroad, was written in the summer of 1892, and was first planned as part of a much vaster scheme. Gerber notes that Twain's original intention "was to make it the first in a series of volumes in which he would send Huck and Tom and Jim to various parts of the world. He could add a million words ... simply 'by adding "Africa," "England," "Germany," etc. to the title page of each successive volume of the series.'"⁶⁹ This elaborate plan, however, came to nothing, but it gives an indication of the reawakened hold that the boys had on his imagination by this point in his life, in contrast to a few years earlier,

both in terms of the fictional possibilities they offered, and of course in the financial opportunity that such a series would create. "Since this was the age of the tremendously popular Nick Carter, Oliver Optic, and Horatio Alger series, it is not surprising that Mark Twain--and his family--should consider the possibility of a Tom Sawyer or Huck Finn Series."⁷⁰

The form of Tom Sawyer Abroad was the same as that of both Huckleberry Finn and the abortive "Huck and Tom among the Indians": a first person narrative by Huck. This must have caused some confusion or uncertainty in the author's mind as to exactly which character he was focussing on. Before settling on the final title, Twain considered a number of different ones for the work: "Huck Finn in Africa," "New Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," "Huckleberry Finn Abroad," or "Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer Abroad,"⁷¹ All but the last of these indicates that he felt his primary emphasis was on the narrator, Huck--at least while he was still writing; but by the end of the summer of 1892, he finally decided on the title used in publication, demonstrating that he had realized that the major focus of the story was on Tom. This would be the form for all the later works about the boys--"Tom Sawyer, Detective," "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy"--and it provides additional evidence of how strong the hold was that Tom, rather than Huck, had on his imagination.

Tom Sawyer Abroad was published more than a year after its completion, in Mary Mapes Dodge's St. Nicholas Magazine

from November, 1893 through April, 1894, after several months of negotiations,⁷² and issued in book form in April, 1894 by Charles L. Webster & Co.--"the last book published by Clemens' own publishing house."⁷³

Twain seems not to have concerned himself much with the novella after it had been accepted for publication by Mrs. Dodge in the fall of 1892 but in the following spring, the two boys once again began to stimulate his creativity, and he began planning a new work concerning them which, as far as is known, has been lost. On April 5, 1893, he wrote his daughter Clara a letter in which he gives a brief account of the new story:

I have been all day mapping out an adventurous summer for Huck and Tom and Jim. As a result I have two closely written pages of notes, enough for the whole book. There will be mysterious murders in the first chapter. The book will be devoted to finding out who committed them.⁷⁴

He continued working on this narrative in the fall of 1893, for on November 10 of that year, he wrote his wife, Livy, a letter mentioning that "I am making good progress with 'Tom Sawyer's Mystery,' for I have written 10,000 words, which is one-seventh of a book like Huck Finn or Prince & Pauper.... The story tells itself."⁷⁵

Thus although the "Mystery" manuscript seems not to have survived, the references to it indicate that Mark Twain's interest in the boys must have been stimulated enough by the

completion and publication of Tom Sawyer Abroad for him to continue thinking and planning works about them immediately after that story was done (a similar pattern, we recall, to Twain's behaviour after finishing Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn--immediately planning sequels to them). Also, the outline of the story makes quite explicit an element of Tom Sawyer's personality that had only been implied in earlier works. With his cleverness and imagination, he would be able to work out complex series of events and solve crimes quite easily, and therefore could play the role of detective very naturally.

He had already displayed something of this ability in Tom Sawyer, in tracking down Injun Joe; and in the "Evasion" episode of Huckleberry Finn he had in effect acted as a mirror image of a detective, planting clues such as anonymous notes to make it seem as if a great crime was about to be committed. In the "Mystery" story, however, Tom's penchant for deduction would form a major, if not central, element of the plot. It may, therefore, have been an anticipation of the later "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy."

The next story about the boys, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," was published in 1896. It was written very quickly in January, 1895, just after Twain heard the story of the Danish pastor, Soren Jensen Quist, evidently from Anna Lillie Greenough, wife of a former Danish ambassador to the United States.⁷⁶ This complex tale--written as the novel, The Minister of Veilby in

1829 by Steen Steenson Blicher--of disappearance, murder, revenge, rejected love, somnambulism, and other elements, evidently appealed immediately and strongly to Twain's imagination, for just after hearing the story, he wrote to his friend H. H. Rogers that he considered it "a first-rate subject for a book. It kept me awake all night, and I began and completed it in my mind. The minute I finish Joan [of Arc] I will take it up."⁷⁷

Its appeal was so strong, in fact, that he was able to complete the story in three weeks, transferring quite straightforwardly the Scandinavian plot to the Phelps plantation on the banks of the Mississippi. Some elements of the lost "Mystery" manuscript may, however, also have been included in the later work. The ex-slave Jim was present in the "Mystery" story (see the letter of April 5, 1893 above). Although Jim does not appear in "Detective," Gerber thinks that "Jim was in the present story at one time" and that his presence was transferred from the "Mystery" fragment:

A portion of the manuscript, pages 15-20, begins, "Our nigger Jim was with us." What follows is an account of how the boys with their treasure money [from the Adventures of Tom Sawyer] had freed Jim's wife and "deef and dumb" daughter and how Jim from then on insisted on taking care of the boys wherever they went. The passage ... has at least two earmarks of being copied from something else. The manuscript for the section is exceptionally clean (only two changes in 485 words) and the handwriting is larger

and more free-flowing than usual. At the end of the passage the author's handwriting abruptly reassumes its customary characteristics.⁷⁸

Yet the presence of Jim, whatever its source, was perhaps too difficult for the Quist-Veilby story to absorb, and the slave was deleted at some point before the "Detective" story was published.

Other elements may have come from the "Mystery" fragment, though, which would help explain some of the anomalies and complexities of the published work. Gerber thinks that "Possibly the male twins come from the original story ["Mystery"]. Almost certainly the business of the diamonds does, for ... the importance of the diamonds in the plot fades once the boys get to Arkansas and elements from the Blicher story take over." As well, Twain seems to have had to "discard an identifying mark that many might have recognized and substitute one--Jubiter's habit of drawing a cross with his finger on his cheek in moments of stress--that only Tom Sawyer would recognize."⁷⁹ If these and perhaps other elements were transferred, we have a clear indication of Twain's utilitarian attitude toward his characters and stories. He was willing to fit them together almost like a jigsaw puzzle in order to save effort in achieving the effect he wanted at the moment.

The Blicher story, of course, contains many elements that naturally would have appealed to Twain and which he would have

recognized as easily fitting into a Tom Sawyer narrative-- particularly one told by Huck Finn. This is especially evident when one considers that this was the height of the Sherlock Holmes craze: "Twain must have been especially pleased to discover how easily Tom and Huck fit into the famous roles of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. All he had to do was to make Tom even shrewder than he had been, and Huck even more of the admiring straight man."⁸⁰ As Justin Kaplan comments, "Tom Sawyer, Detective was a frank attempt to cash in on the current rage for Sherlock Holmes and detective fiction in general."⁸¹ The story, therefore, would have not merely ready-made characters, but a ready-made audience for it as well.

In addition, there were in it such familiar Twain devices as "a false deaf-mute, the fear of ghosts, swindles perpetrated on the innocent, murder, mistaken identities, and a dramatic trial."⁸² All of these, combined with the quick profit he made from the story--\$2,600 for serialization in Harper's (though it did not appear until more than a year later: August-September, 1896)⁸³--demonstrates why he found it so quick and easy to write and then sell the work.

These same elements also resulted in the generally poor regard in which the story has been held. The incredibly complex plot, the superficial characters, the formulaic writing, all serve to make the work a very shallow one in most critics' regard. Even Twain himself seems to have offered an oblique

criticism: "What a curious thing a 'detective' story is. And was there ever one that the author needn't be ashamed of, except 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue?'"⁸⁴ "Tom Sawyer, Detective," then, clearly has many limitations and flaws. Yet, as we shall see in ensuing chapters, it plays an important transitional role leading to the major surviving work in the series, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy."

The complicated--and perhaps unresolved--arguments over the intended audience for the Adventures of Tom Sawyer made a curious reappearance in the case of both these latter novellas, Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective." In regard to the former, Clemens' wife and children "thought it a story for young folk, but the humourist cannily declared that it was for any boy between eight years and eighty. 'I conceive the right way to write a story for boys is to write it so that it will not only interest boys but will strongly interest any man who has ever been a boy.'"⁸⁵

On the other hand, with "Tom Sawyer, Detective," Twain said explicitly that it "is really written for grown folk, though I expect young folk to read it, too."⁸⁶ The somewhat wavering conception that the writer had of both works indicates that this issue was still unresolved in his mind.

The next work in the series, however, unquestionably explores adult issues. This is "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," and for Twain it clearly represented a kind of culmination for a

number of issues that had been present from the very earliest works about the boys, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, and Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. In fact, the seeds of the story may have been planted in a notebook entry dating from the time of the completion of the latter novel. In 1884, Twain made a notebook entry: "Villains very scarce.... Pater-rollers and slavery."⁸⁷ This, as Walter Blair makes clear, was "a reference to the patrollers who guarded pre-Civil War Missouri towns against abolitionists and escaping slaves."⁸⁸

Nothing came of this idea, however, until many years later. In 1894 Twain wrote "A Scrap of Curious History," concerning an abolitionist in Hannibal who helped a slave escape and was hanged for it. Many of the details of this event "would recur in "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy"--the fearsome abolitionists; the captured runaway slave; the secret society with its costumes, ceremonies, and warning posters; the pious printer; murder; and communal excitement and confusion."⁸⁹ Two years later, Twain noted down another idea that would be utilized in the story: "Have Huck tell how one white brother shaved his head, put on a wool wig and was blackened and sold as a negro. Escaped that night, washed himself, and helped hunt for himself under pay."⁹⁰ A year later, he elaborated on this idea: "Tom is disguised as a negro and sold in Ark [ansas] for \$10, then he and Huck help hunt for him after the disguise is removed."⁹¹

This was the outline of the plot that was finally used in

the "Conspiracy" story--in typical Twain fashion, only after years of rumination and discarded plans. The author began the work evidently in the summer of 1897, while in Weggis, Switzerland,⁹² more than two years after completing the preceding story in the sequence, "Tom Sawyer, Detective." "Conspiracy," therefore, was the first Tom and Huck story written after the final failure of the Paige typesetting machine, personal bankruptcy, the round-the-world tour, the completion of the book based on it (Following the Equator) to pay off his debts, and the death of his favourite daughter, Susie, in the house at Hartford in August, 1896.

Written after all these disasters--and in particular with a lessening of financial pressures--"Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" involves a deeper exploration of several profound themes than had been present in any of the works from the early 1890's. Indeed, it involved themes unexplored since the writing of "Huck and Tom among the Indians" almost fifteen years earlier. The work is closely linked with the preceding story, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," and in fact the events of that work provide much of the impulse for Tom's behaviour--and his retribution--in this one.

Twain seems to have written about a third of the fragment by the end of the summer of 1897, up through the creation of the "Conspiracy" portion of the narrative. At this point, the author's interest may have been directed to a new and deeply fascinating project, "The Mysterious Stranger" story, an idea

that he had been exploring also for several years.

In 1895, Twain had made a notebook entry, "What uncle Satan said,"⁹³ and in 1897 "was writing 'Letters to Satan' inviting His Grace to 'make a pleasure tour through the world';⁹⁴ in June of that year, just before beginning the "Conspiracy" story, he jotted down an idea for a book: "Satan's boyhood--going around with the other boys and surprising them with devilish miracles."⁹⁵

When "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" faltered in the fall of 1897, Twain turned to the Satan narrative, placing the action in the world of Huck and Tom, possibly to avoid abandoning entirely his frustrated efforts. For the first version of the "Mysterious Stranger" was evidently written in the fall of 1897 and was set in St. Petersburg and had Huck at least as one of the major characters.⁹⁶ But this version was almost immediately discarded as a viable narrative, and its nineteen manuscript pages were worked into the next version, "The Chronicle of Young Satan," which Twain worked on intermittently for the next three years. The "Chronicle" is set in a small town in Austria in 1702--far removed, at least superficially, from the boyhood world of Twain's childhood.

A year later, though, the author returned to the idea of setting the "Mysterious Stranger" story in St. Petersburg, and in November, 1898, wrote out a long notebook entry outlining the form of such a story, quite different from the earlier attempt:

Story of little Satan, jr, who came to (Petersburg (Hannibal)) went to school was popular and greatly liked by (Huck and Tom) who knew his secret. The others were jealous, and the girls didn't like him because he smelt of brimstone.... By and by he is converted and becomes a methodist. and quits miracling.... As he does no more miracles, even his pals fall away and disbelieve in him.⁹⁷

Twain began a story based, very loosely, on this outline shortly thereafter, and wrote six chapters of it in November and December of 1898.

This work, now known as "Schoolhouse Hill," has several interesting aspects, but on balance cannot be said to fit more than remotely into the sequence of stories about the boys. It is the first surviving work involving Huck and Tom since the original Adventures of Tom Sawyer that is not written in the first person; and after the first two chapters, Huck and Tom disappear completely from the narrative. The focus of the work centres on Number 44, Satan's son, and to a lesser extent on Oliver Hotchkiss.

Yet in the brief appearance of the two boys, and in the omniscient author's comments about them and their fellows, the work provides a useful glimpse of Mark Twain's perception of them, now almost twenty-five years after their creation, a perception not filtered through Huck Finn's consciousness. The omniscient narrator allows Twain more freedom to comment on his characters than would be possible if Huck were the narrator.

For example, there is a touching vignette at the beginning of "Schoolhouse Hill" of Huck helping Tom with his sled in front of the schoolhouse, "although he was not a member of the school in these days; he merely came in order to be with Tom until school 'took in.'"⁹⁸ In the emphasis on the closeness between the two boys, this reminds us of the brief but moving exchange between Huck and Tom in the Adventures of Tom Sawyer, when they are discussing what they would do if they find the buried treasure. Tom announces he will get married, and Huck replies, "Only if you get married I'll be more lonesomer than ever." To which Tom immediately responds, "No you won't. You'll come and live with me."⁹⁹ These two incidents perhaps most clearly define the fundamentally familial relationship between Huck and Tom. The relationship was established in the first novel and remains remarkably constant throughout all the stories involving the boys.

"Schoolhouse Hill" seems to have been written in a brief spurt of creativity and then abandoned, perhaps because of what William M. Gibson calls "inherent contradictions within the character of 44 and his projected actions."¹⁰⁰ Twain's extensive notes for the story, though, contain a number of promising plot lines that might have created entertaining fiction: Number 44 would fall in love with the daughter of a Presbyterian pastor, he would transport Tom and Huck around the world (reminding us perhaps of Tom Sawyer Abroad) and even into Hell itself. There were plans for him to start an "anti-Moral Sense" Church,¹⁰¹

and in general he was to act as a kind of enlightened teacher to humanity.

But the direction "Schoolhouse Hill" was taking by the sixth chapter may have contributed to the story's abrupt abandonment. As it is written, the fragment increasingly becomes a philosophical tract at the expense of fictional action and characterization, particularly any action involving Huck and Tom, who completely disappear from the narrative by the end of the second chapter. In this abandonment of the two boys, "Schoolhouse Hill" resembles Twain's first attempt to write the "Mysterious Stranger" story, also set in St. Petersburg. Its 19 pages were quickly abandoned and worked into the "Chronicle of Young Satan" narrative.

William Macnaughton suggests another reason why "Schoolhouse Hill" may have been so precipitously abandoned after what William Gibson calls "a moderately promising beginning."¹⁰² Twain may have wanted a long subscription book once more, and what would be a better subject than a story about the two popular boys, but not one that merely "tantalized his readers with references to Tom and Huck, but rather one that centered on their adventures."¹⁰³ Therefore, he may have returned at this point to the "Conspiracy" story that he had shelved a year earlier, this time continuing it with the murder mystery element of Bat Bradish's killing.

At this point in the narrative, there were many things

that held a great deal of promise; the town has been "deliciously frightened"¹⁰³ by Tom's conspiracy, there is the murder mystery, there is the danger that the falsely accused Jim is facing--and the effect that this has on Tom, there is humour, satire, and a number of potentially rewarding plot complications that might have been developed, such as fleeing with Jim to England or the appearance of "Burrell's Gang" of cutthroats.¹⁰⁴ But once again, the narrative seems to have been shelved, perhaps in January, 1899,¹⁰⁵ evidently because, as Macnaughton suggests, Twain "was not ready to force his imagination"¹⁰⁶ in the direction that any of these developments would have entailed.

He seems to have returned from "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" story to the "Chronicle of Young Satan" in the spring of 1899,¹⁰⁷ and worked primarily on the latter story over the next year or two. It was not until the spring of 1902 that his interest in the boys seems to have been reawakened, and at this point he began to work explicitly on an idea that had been present at least at the back of his mind ever since beginning work on the novel Tom Sawyer in 1874. This idea concerned the return of the boys to St. Petersburg as adults; it was first mentioned, of course, in the 1874 outline. Tom was to come back to the village at the age of 37 or so.¹⁰⁸ Then the motif was repeated in the brief coda to the synopsis of the dramatization of that novel that Twain wrote in 1875 (the return of "General Sawyer" and "Bishop Finn" fifty years later). Later, after

the misfortunes of the 1880's and 90's, it was mentioned in his notes with the idea of Huck and Tom dying in despair. Now Twain began to plan and write a new novel based on this scenario. His interest may have been prompted by Twain's own return to Hannibal in the spring of 1902 to receive an honorary degree from the University of Missouri.¹⁰⁹ As quoted by Blair from the Ralls County Record, during this visit almost exactly fifty years after he himself had left the town, Twain "gave 'a very humorous and touchingly pathetic' speech, 'breaking down in tears at its conclusion.' 'Commenting on his boyhood days and referring to his mother ... was too much for the great humorist, and he melted down in tears.'"¹¹⁰

The depth of emotion that this visit seems to have prompted may be responsible for the rather remarkable tone and subject matter that this new work about the boys contained, much more explicitly adult than any of the previous works concerning the two boys. Girls belong to Tom Sawyer's Gang, "kissing parties" are mentioned, and Twain reminds himself to "Name all the sweethearts ... Laura Hawkins Becky Pavey Mary Miller Artemissa Briggs Jane Robards Sarah Robards Nanny Ousely Becky Thatcher Cornelia Thompson Jenny Brady Jenny Craig."¹¹¹ There is "even a suggestion that one girl, as Huck says, was a 'horlat.'"¹¹² Clearly, the possibility for a relatively explicit discussion of youthful sexuality was present in this work.

But another lengthy note suggests the same sort of evasiveness that characterized the references to Peggy Mills' rape almost twenty years earlier in "Huck and Tom among the Indians." This enigmatic note may have formed merely one plot line of the "Fifty Years After" narrative, or it might have been the basis of the novel itself:

The time John Briggs's nigger-boy woke his anger and got a cuffing ... John went, hearing his father coming, for he had done something so shameful that he could never bring himself to confess to the boys what it was; no one knew but the negro lad, John's father is in a fury, and accuses the lad, who doesn't deny it; ... no corporeal [sic] punishment is half severe enough--he sells him down the river. John aghast when he sneaks home next day and learns it. "What did you sell him for, father?" Tells him. John is speechless,--can't confess.

The lad, very old, comes back in '02 and he and John meet, with the others left alive.¹¹³

This note may conceivably refer to some sort of youthful sexual peccadillo, but it is so vague as to be impossible to know for sure. But what is also noteworthy about this plan is that it may represent a curious confusion in Twain's mind between autobiography and fiction. John Briggs was one of his real-life boyhood friends (and Twain visited with him during his return to Hannibal in 1902¹¹⁴), yet he is to appear in a narrative told by Huck Finn--a fictional character.

It was possibly at this time also that Twain wrote a

brief fragment--perhaps a reminiscent note--about an incident from his childhood which might have appeared in the "Fifty Years After" story. It concerns a girl who scares an old lady into "the sylum"¹¹⁵ by creeping up behind her with a mask and surprising her. This incident, based evidently on a real event of Twain's childhood,¹¹⁶ is mentioned in a note about the planned novel, with added, melodramatic touches: "old lady now, still in asylum--a bride then. What went with him? Shall we visit her? And shall she be expecting him in her faded bridal robes and flowers?"¹¹⁷ The surviving fragment, therefore, may be a discarded version of this event.

The interest created in Twain in the world of Huck and Tom in 1902 may have also been sufficient for him to continue work on "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" at this time as well.¹¹⁸ It was at this point that he seems to have almost brought the story to a perhaps surprising conclusion, discarding all thoughts of the boys fleeing with Jim to England. Instead, he concentrated on the idea of giving Tom Sawyer a badly needed lesson in moral education, teaching him something about responsibility, and thereby providing an appropriate conclusion to that long-wrestled with problem, that of Tom Sawyer's growing up.

At least a portion of the "Fifty Years After" story was written during the summer and early fall of 1902, for William Dean Howells makes a provocative reference to it in a letter

to Twain of October 20, 1902:

I have got Huck Finn safe, and will keep it till I come down, or will send it by express, as you say. It is a great layout; what I shall enjoy most will be the return of the old fellows to the scene, and their tall lying. There is a matchless chance. I suppose you will put plenty of pegs in, in this prefatory part.¹¹⁹

Despite this encouragement, Twain seems not to have progressed much further with the narrative. In 1906, in an autobiographical dictation, he stated that in 1902 he had begun another Huck and Tom story "and carried it as far as thirty-eight thousand words,"¹²⁰ but then had destroyed it. So far, no manuscript of the "Fifty Years After" story has been found.

The question remains as to why Twain seems neither to have finished nor made any effort to publish either this work or the somewhat earlier "Conspiracy" story, despite their evident literary worth. (Howells, in his 1910 memoir, My Mark Twain, refers to the "Fifty Years After" narrative as "an admirable story."¹²¹ Perhaps Macnaughton says it best when he suggests that by the early years of this century, the two boys had acquired a more than imaginative life for Twain, and that perhaps "it may have come to seem to Mark Twain almost a sacrilege ... to consider compelling his boys to risk further public adventures."¹²²

From all these narratives, a number of noteworthy points stand out regarding the history of Twain's involvement with the

two boys. Perhaps the most notable is the remarkable intensity of interest that Twain displayed towards them over such a long period of time--more than thirty years from the "Boy's Manuscript" to the "Fifty Years After" narrative and "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy." This was over a period of his life that included the transition from bachelorhood to family man, extraordinary fame and prosperity, bankruptcy, the death of his favourite daughter, a slow recovery to economic health. Yet through all these experiences, Huck and Tom and their world remain remarkably consistent as a source for creative fiction for Twain.

Prominent also in the Huck and Tom narratives over the years is Twain's persistent interest in not merely telling the story of boys, but of somehow carrying his protagonists through to adulthood. This persistence reflects the original 1874 outline for the novel Tom Sawyer. A major point in it, the return of the boys to the village as adults, remained in Twain's mind throughout the history of the Huck and Tom saga, finally emerging in the "Fifty Years After" narrative.

NOTES

- ¹ Stone, p. 41.
- ² Mark Twain, The Complete Short Stories, ed. Charles Neider (New York: Bantam, 1971), p. 7.
- ³ Twain, Stories, p. 9.
- ⁴ Stone, p. 61; Baldanza, pp. 104-106; Blair, pp. 75-83.
- ⁵ Stone, p. 44.
- ⁶ Twain, Stories, p. 7.
- ⁷ Smith, p. 4.
- ⁸ Stone, p. 46.
- ⁹ Theodore Hornberger, ed., Mark Twain's Letters to Will Bowen (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1941), pp. 18-20.
- ¹⁰ Hornberger, p. 11.
- ¹¹ Hornberger, p. 18.
- ¹² Justin Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1966), p. 115.
- ¹³ Quoted in DeVoto, p. 5.
- ¹⁴ DeVoto, Work, p. 5.
- ¹⁵ DeVoto, Work, p. 7.
- ¹⁶ DeVoto, Work, p. 39.
- ¹⁷ DeVoto, Work, p. 44.
- ¹⁸ DeVoto, Work, p. 37.
- ¹⁹ Hornberger, p. 20.
- ²⁰ Kaplan, p. 163.

- 21 Baldanza, p. 88.
- 22 Baldanza, p. 89.
- 23 Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today (New York: New American Library, 1969), p. 376.
- 24 DeVoto, Work, p. 4.
- 25 Kaplan, p. 178.
- 26 Gerber, "Introduction," p. 10.
- 27 Hill, p. 386; see also Kaplan, p. 179.
- 28 Hill, p. 386.
- 29 Hill, p. 387.
- 30 DeVoto, Eruption, p. 197.
- 31 Hill, p. 389.
- 32 Smith and Gibson, I, 87-88.
- 33 Smith and Gibson, I, 90-91.
- 34 Smith and Gibson, I, 91.
- 35 Smith and Gibson, I, 92.
- 36 See, for example, Walter Blair's Mark Twain & Huck Finn (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960), p. 98.
- 37 DeVoto, Work, pp. 8-9.
- 38 Smith and Gibson, I, 91.
- 39 Smith and Gibson, I, 111.
- 40 Smith and Gibson, I, 112.
- 41 Smith and Gibson, I, 122.
- 42 Smith and Gibson, I, 124.
- 43 Gerber, p. 234.
- 44 Hill, p. 387.

- 45 Gerber, p. 237.
- 46 Regan, pp. 114-115.
- 47 Gerber, p. 233.
- 48 Hill, p. 391.
- 49 Gerber, p. 237.
- 50 DeVoto, Work, p. 47.
- 51 Samuel Langhorne Clemens, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (New York: Norton, 1961), p. 7.
- 52 DeVoto, Work, p. 46.
- 53 Smith and Gibson, I, 144.
- 54 See note 36.
- 55 DeVoto, Work, pp. 45-104.
- 56 DeVoto, Work, pp. 53-54.
- 57 Clemens, p. 226.
- 58 Stone, p. 189.
- 59 Kaplan, p. 142.
- 60 Walter Blair, "Appendix B" in his Mark Twain's Hannibal, Huck & Tom, p. 373.
- 61 There may, however, have been some confusion in the minds of other segments of society. The book was banned in the Concord, Mass. library shortly after publication as unfit for children. See Kaplan, p. 268.
- 62 Mark Twain, "Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer among the Indians," in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 108.
- 63 Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 373; and Stone, pp. 173-174.
- 64 Robert Pack Browning, Michael B. Frank, Lin Salamo, Mark Twain's Notebooks & Journals (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979), III, 606.

- 65 Browning, III, 645.
- 66 Mark Twain, Notebook 18, TS pp. 19, 21, 31, quoted in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 7.
- 67 Mark Twain, Synopsis of "Tom Sawyer: A Drama," in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 245.
- 68 Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 245.
- 69 Gerber, pp. 245-246.
- 70 Gerber, p. 246, n. 113.
- 71 Gerber, p. 245, n. 9, and p. 246, n. 13; and D. M. McKeithan, A Mark Twain Notebook for 1892. The American Institute of the University of Upsala Essays and Studies on American Language and Literature, Vol. 17 (Upsala: American Institute, Upsala University, 1959), p. 16, n. 25.
- 72 Gerber, pp. 247-248.
- 73 Gerber, p. 249.
- 74 Quoted in Gerber, p. 346.
- 75 Quoted in Gerber, p. 347.
- 76 Gerber, p. 349. See also Bay, pp. 86-88.
- 77 Quoted in Gerber, p. 348.
- 78 Gerber, p. 346.
- 79 Gerber, p. 353.
- 80 Gerber, pp. 352-353.
- 81 Kaplan, p. 332.
- 82 Gerber, p. 352.
- 83 Gerber, p. 351.
- 84 Mark Twain, Notebook 30, TS p. 32, quoted in Gerber, p. 355.
- 85 Gerber, p. 245.

- 86 Quoted in Gerber, p. 344.
- 87 Browning, III, 30.
- 88 Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 152.
- 89 Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 153.
- 90 Mark Twain, Notebook 31, TS p. 22, quoted in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 153.
- 91 Mark Twain, Notebook 32a, TS p. 58, quoted in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 153.
- 92 Macnaughton, p. 33.
- 93 Mark Twain, Notebook 28, TS p. 51, quoted in William M. Gibson, "Introduction," Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts, p. 17.
- 94 Gibson, p. 17.
- 95 Mark Twain, Notebook 32a, TS p. 37, quoted in Gibson, p. 17.
- 96 Gibson, p. 5.
- 97 Mark Twain, Notebook 32, TS p. 50, quoted in Gibson, p. 8.
- 98 Mark Twain, "Schoolhouse Hill," in Gibson, p. 175.
- 99 Gerber, p. 178.
- 100 Gibson, p. 9.
- 101 Twain's notes for this work are given in Gibson, pp. 428-429.
- 102 Gibson, p. 9.
- 103 Macnaughton, p. 112.
- 104 Macnaughton, p. 116.
- 105 Macnaughton, pp. 116-117.
- 106 Macnaughton, p. 116.
- 107 Macnaughton, pp. 123-124.

108 See p. 7.

109 Kaplan, p. 365.

110 From the Ralls County Record, quoted in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 17.

111 Mark Twain, Notebook 35, TS p. 13, quoted in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, pp. 16-17.

112 Quoted in Kaplan, p. 365.

113 Mark Twain, Notebook 35, TS p. 23, quoted in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 16.

114 Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 17.

115 Mark Twain, "Doughface," in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 144.

116 Mark Twain, "Villagers of 1840-3," in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 32.

117 Mark Twain, Notebook 35, TS p. 12, quoted in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 142.

118 Macnaughton, p. 184.

119 Smith and Gibson, Letters, II, 747.

120 DeVoto, Eruption, p. 199.

121 Howells, p. 90.

122 Macnaughton, pp. 184-185.

CHAPTER III

The Theme of Maturity

The outline for the novel Tom Sawyer that Twain wrote in the summer of 1874 demonstrates that when he started to write that book one of his major concerns was the process whereby a boy becomes a man.¹ In the author's mind at this time, the process of maturing was seen to consist of a boy's running off and then returning years later to his home town as an adult. On this point, the outline reads: "(age 37 to 40,) return & meet grown babies & toothless old drivellers who were the grandees of his boyhood."² Tom Sawyer, as it was completed and published, shows that at some point in its composition, Twain gave up this idea and deliberately chose to keep the story in the boy's childhood. If Hamlin Hill's comments³ on the novel are correct, this decision was reached only after a great deal of doubt and hesitation on the author's part. The crucial moment evidently came during the Jackson's Island episode, when it seems as if "preparations were ... made for Tom to begin his 'Battle of Life in many lands,' to leave both St. Petersburg and his companions who were about to return there."⁴ But Twain chose not to have Tom run off alone, with the intention of returning him years later to the village. Instead, he kept the locale of the book in St. Petersburg, and kept Tom and his friends as boys.

A question has remained, therefore, as to what extent Twain retained an interest in bringing his characters up, both in this work and in all the subsequent narratives about the boys that he wrote over the next thirty years. The end of the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, with its evasion of social and emotional complexity, has added to the uncertainty about this question. Close examination of the later works will presently show that eventual maturity--the end and purpose of childhood--remained a concern of virtually all these stories. Sometimes it is only implicit; often it is explicit.

This being so, it clearly undermines the image of Mark Twain as "imprisoned in boyhood," to use Bernard DeVoto's phrase.⁵ In fact, it might be more accurate as well as more just to describe Twain not as "imprisoned" (with its pejorative connotations) in boyhood, but as extremely clever and skilful at using his boyhood experiences as a source for rewarding fiction. Always, though, the author concentrated on how these childhood experiences shaped the adult who would later emerge from them.

In order to understand more fully Twain's continuing interest in maturity, it might be useful to begin by defining what childhood and maturity meant to Mark Twain, as far as can be determined from his stories about the boys. From the 1874 outline for Tom Sawyer, it would seem that becoming an adult meant primarily the passage of time, coupled with a wide assort-

ment of different experiences ("the Battle of Life in many lands") in a variety of circumstances. This is what Twain himself had experienced in the years since he left Hannibal in 1853.

But by abandoning an account of "the Battle of Life" in Tom Sawyer, together with Tom's return years later as an adult, Twain avoided also somewhat facile melodrama. The arrangement and structure of the published novel reveal that a more specific and convincing approach to Tom's development emerged from this change in plan. As Hamlin Hill points out, in working on the manuscript Twain manipulated events, rearranged chapters, and in general, structured his story to show "Tom in a group of critical situations toward the end of the book where maturer judgement and courage were vital. These events required a Tom Sawyer who was nowhere apparent in the idyllic first half of the book."⁶

Before Hill, Walter Blair discussed this same issue, coming to much the same conclusion. In Tom Sawyer, Twain was attempting to describe a "real" boy, in contrast to the unreal caricatures of "good boys" and "bad boys" that had dominated so much of 19th-century fiction.⁷ "What a real boy was was suggested by the very terms of the attack; he was not simply good or bad but a mixture of virtue and mischievousness. And he could play pranks at the same time he was developing qualities which would make him a normal adult."⁸ The passage of time, this view of childhood implies, would change the

nature and quality of a child's actions:

As a "real" boy grew up ... the nature of his actions would change. Not only would they change from year to year but also from month to month. Less and less, he would behave like an irresponsible and ignorant savage; more and more he would act like a responsible and intelligent adult.⁹

Blair goes on to describe how each of the major narrative strands of the novel shows this development occurring in the boy:

Three of these narrative strands, however, are climaxed by a characteristic and mature sort of action, a sort of action, moreover, directly opposed to the initial action. Tom chivalrously takes Becky's punishment and faithfully helps her in the cave; he defies boyish superstition and courageously testifies for Muff Potter; he forgets a childish antipathy and shows mature concern for his aunt's uneasiness about him. The Injun Joe story, though it is the least useful of the four so far as showing Tom's maturing is concerned, by showing Huck conquering fear to rescue the widow, has value as a repetition--with variations--of the motif of the book.¹⁰

From this reading of the novel, then, one of the major components of maturity is that of responsibility, of being accountable for the consequences of one's own actions. As well, there must be courage and a certain amount of empathy (as with Aunt Polly in the passage above) for the feelings of other people, particularly those close to one.

At the end of Tom Sawyer, it would seem that Tom is well on his way to achieving this sort of adulthood. Indeed, Blair remarks that by the end of the novel, "Something has happened to Tom. He is talking more like an adult than like an unsocial child."¹¹ Twain himself may have concurred with this assessment, for he ended his "Conclusion" to the book, saying explicitly, "So endeth this chronicle. It being strictly the history of a boy, it must stop here; the story could not go much further without becoming the history of a man."¹²

But this perception by Twain of what he had accomplished in this, his first work of fiction, must have been quite a tenuous one. Otherwise, there would not have been the months of indecision and confusion over what audience the book was intended for, as has been discussed earlier.¹³ In fact, his continued interest in telling the story of a boy growing up is indicated in his letter to Howells of July 5, 1875, just after announcing that he had finished Tom Sawyer: "By & by I shall take a boy of twelve & run him on through life"¹⁴ in a novel. The book embodying this idea was Huckleberry Finn, finally completed eight years later.

In the year between the summer of 1875, when he finished Tom Sawyer, and the summer of 1876, when he began Huckleberry Finn, this idea seems to have diminished in importance for Twain, however. The opening chapters of the new book, written during that summer, were, in DeVoto's phrase, "little more than

a continuation of Tom Sawyer,"¹⁵ and "pretty feeble stuff,"¹⁶ at that. "There was no narrative purpose, no end toward which the story was moving,"¹⁷ by the time Twain came to the end of the first section. Least of all was there any sense that this work would tell of the maturation of a boy into a man.

The activities that Tom Sawyer's Gang engage in in the first few chapters of the novel, such as the attack on the Sunday School, possess none of the significance or resonance that such events as Tom's rescuing Becky from the cave in the last chapters of Tom Sawyer have. There seems to be no real effort to continue the process of maturation that was evident in the earlier work. Yet despite this, even in these opening chapters can be seen developments that will provide an important element in this process. Specifically, when Huck and Jim join together on Jackson's Island, Twain discovers in the problem of slavery a topic that will provide extraordinary significance, both for this work and for many of the later stories involving the boys.

As was mentioned earlier,¹⁸ Twain began to use slave characters as early as The Gilded Age (1873), with its sympathetic portrayal of Uncle Dan'l. This process was furthered in "A True Story" (1874), the first work of Twain's published in the Atlantic.¹⁹ In it are anticipations of future work. As Kaplan says about the story, "in a number of ways it foreshadows Huckleberry Finn--in its explicit sympathy for the Negro, its level vision of

the brutalities of a slaveholding society, and the enormous skill [Twain] displays in telling a first-person story in impeccably nuanced but never obscure dialect."²⁰

In Tom Sawyer, the use and importance of slave characters are minimal. It is not until Twain began to write Huckleberry Finn that he made one into an important element of the work. As Chadwick Hansen points out, Jim plays several--sometimes contradictory--roles in the novel; among them are the comic stage dandy, a father-figure, a Negro "Mammy," and "Man" in the abstract.²¹ It is in fact Huck's discovery of the humanity of the Negro that provides so important a part of his growing up. The recognition of the humanity of the slave is a vital element in many of the later works where it is used in the same way: to promote a boy's maturity.

Huck's discovery of Jim's humanity, it should be noted, is not an easy or short process. At the beginning of the novel, Huck acquiesces in Tom's childish trick on Jim with the hat. Then, in his account of the consequences of the trick, the boy manifests a neutral, if not mildly contemptuous attitude: "Jim was most ruined, for a servant, because he got so stuck up on account of having seen the devil and been rode by witches."²² It is only after the two fugitives arrive on Jackson's Island that Jim begins to develop a more complex personality, and Huck begins to appreciate this. When Huck plays his foolish trick on him with the snake-skin in Chapter 10,

Huck immediately recognizes his own stupidity, commenting:

"That all comes of my being such a fool as to not remember that whenever you leave a dead snake its mate always comes there and curls around it."²³ But he still feels no great empathy with the escaping slave or much remorse for what he has done. This absence of feeling indicates that he still has no real sense of Jim's humanity.

Not until the "dream" episode on board the raft in Chapter 15 does Huck begin to realize that the slave has feelings. He fools Jim once more with his assertion that their separation in the fog was only a dream. Then after Jim has "interpreted" the dream, he asks him what all the real debris from their separation stands for. Jim replies with extraordinary dignity: "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."²⁴ This leads to Huck's famous confession, in which he at last acknowledges that Jim--too--has feelings: "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."²⁵

But even this incident, moving though it is, does not fully persuade Huck of Jim's humanity--and hence the injustice of his enslavement. A few pages after this, the boy is quite

seriously contemplating turning Jim over to the two slave hunters. He only decides against it at the last moment.²⁶ Shortly after this, Huck finds himself at the Grangerfords, and several days pass before he even thinks of what has happened to his friend. Later on, in the episodes with the King and the Duke, Jim disappears from the narrative for long periods of time and there is no indication that Huck concerns himself much if at all with what he is doing.

At the same time, though, there are a number of events that reaffirm Jim's humanity, kindness and sensitivity. These incidents include his taking Huck's watch on the raft for him and the story of his deaf and dumb daughter. Huck's recounting of these events indicates that he is aware of these qualities in the black man. But the crucial moment of Huck's recognition, not merely of Jim's humanity but also of the bond that has grown up between them and the boy's debt to Jim for all his many kindnesses, does not occur until after the King and the Duke have sold Jim to Silas Phelps for forty dollars. After much agonizing over the proper course of action--whether to inform Miss Watson of where her runaway slave is--Huck finally decides, in his famous "All right, then, I'll go to hell" speech, to steal Jim from slavery.²⁷

This obviously is a moment of extraordinary maturity for Huck, beyond anything that Tom Sawyer had experienced in his novel. Huck decides not merely to take the morally proper course

of action, but also to take the responsibility for what he intends to do: he believes that to steal Jim out of slavery is without a question a sin, but is still willing to go to hell for it. At the same time, this act shows the two other elements that characterize maturation as indicated by Blair: courage and a sense of empathy with another person's suffering.

The extent to which Huck has grown up by this act is shown most clearly by a comparison between him and Tom Sawyer when the latter reappears a few pages later. As Leo Marx comments, "By the time [Huck] arrives at the Phelps place, he is not the boy who had been playing robbers with Tom's gang in St. Petersburg the summer before. All he has seen and felt since he parted from Tom has deepened his knowledge of human nature and of himself."²⁸ It might be added that Huck has undergone experiences that are far beyond anything Tom has endured, either in this work or in the previous novel.

Yet when Tom reenters the book, he immediately starts to dominate the action. "Soon Huck has fallen almost completely under his sway once more, and we are asked to believe that the boy who felt pity for the rogues is now capable of making Jim's capture the occasion for a game."²⁹ The degree to which Huck has grown up while Tom has not can perhaps be measured by the amount of outrage many readers and critics, such as Marx, feel when they contemplate the travesty into which Tom turns the liberation of Jim in the last ten chapters of the book.

Although he knows that Jim is already free under the terms of Miss Watson's will, Tom forces the black man to go through an elaborate charade to gain freedom. The unquestionable difference between the two boys at this point indicates that Tom Sawyer may not have been quite so close to adulthood at the end of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer as his creator thought when he wrote the "Conclusion" to that novel. Further, more profound experiences will be needed for Tom to achieve the same level of maturity that Huck arrives at in the course of this work.

An indication that Twain may have realized that the ending of Huckleberry Finn left many issues unresolved can be shown by the fact that he began work on a sequel to it even before Huckleberry Finn was published. One major element in this sequel, "Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer Among the Indians," can be seen as the need to give Tom Sawyer a lesson in moral education and responsibility for his own actions similar to the one undergone by Huck Finn in his novel. In this process, the figure of Jim becomes crucial. The problem of Negro slavery had been ignored in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. The theme was discovered by Twain only in the writing of Huckleberry Finn, and now Twain was going to use it to promote Tom's growth.

The importance of slavery in Twain's thought is perhaps best described by Stone, who says that for Twain "slavery [was] the archetypal source of evil in the world of his childhood."³⁰ During the years that Twain wrote Huckleberry Finn, he came to

realize the injustice of slavery. It is not surprising that so much of that novel is concerned with teaching Huck the humanity of the Negro and therefore the terrible crime of his slavery.

It is also not surprising, then, that once having taught the lesson of the Negro's humanity to Huck, Twain should not have wanted to teach it to the other major character from his childhood, Tom Sawyer. When one considers how hard and time-consuming it was for Huck, an outcast of society, to recognize the humanity of the slave, one can imagine the difficulty Tom will have; for he is a representative of that society and one whose Aunt owns slaves.³¹

The callousness with which Tom treats Jim in the "Evasion" episode of Huckleberry Finn can be seen as having a moral and literary purpose. It shows Tom at his worst before undergoing a major lesson in maturity in the next work in the series. Indeed, Twain may even have been planning the sequel to Huckleberry Finn as he wrote the "Evasion" chapters, for the story he began immediately after finishing Huckleberry Finn, "Huck and Tom Among the Indians," shows Tom receiving some quite painful lessons in self-knowledge and responsibility.

There are two major elements of Tom's immaturity that become obvious in the last ten chapters of Huckleberry Finn. The first is his ever-present desire to turn all activity into a "game," thereby manifesting a childish ignorance of the

reality of suffering. He makes everything into a "prank," as Blair describes it.³² The second is his lack of self-knowledge, his complete unconsciousness that what he is doing to Jim is not only foolish, but cruel and heartless as well. Both of these elements will receive an appropriate rebuke in the "Indians" fragment, and this development indicates that Twain was well aware of these failures in his hero.

The immediate impetus for the "Indians" sequel comes from a remark by Tom very close to the end of Huckleberry Finn. He says, "le's all three slide out of here, one of these nights, and get an outfit, and go for howling adventures amongst the Indians, over in the Territory, for a couple of weeks or two."³³ The banality of his conception of this plan is shown by his use of the phrases "howling adventures" and "for a couple of weeks or two." Unlike Huck's profound and moving "adventures" on his flight down the river, this new expedition, according to Tom, will just be a brief, vacation-like sojourn among the Indians before a safe return home.

Of course, as was mentioned earlier,³⁴ Twain gave himself an even stronger possibility for a sequel in Huck's closing remarks to the book, his declaration: "I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilise me and I can't stand it. I been there before."³⁵ However, Twain chose to ignore the solitary journey when he came to write the sequel and instead

concentrated on Tom's plan. A number of reasons can be surmised for this. First among them is the appeal that Tom Sawyer had for the author.³⁶ Characters similar to Tom in outlook and personality appear in many others of his works--Hank Morgan, Tom Canty, and others. Twain himself shared many of Tom's traits, particularly that of self-dramatization. As well, the passivity displayed by Huck in almost all of his encounters with others limited the kinds of situations he could engage in for suitable exploitation in fiction. But perhaps most importantly, at the end of his novel, Huck had received his lesson in moral education. He had grown up as much as he could, and Twain may have simply wanted to turn his attention back to Tom, who, after all, was the focus of the original 1874 outline for the story. The culmination of the outline was to be the maturation of the hero Tom Sawyer, not Huck Finn.

It is of course impossible to determine exactly what Twain's ruminations on this point may have been. Yet the fact remains that when Twain came to write the sequel he deliberately followed Tom's plan to have "all three" of them head for the Indian Territory, and not Huck alone. Without question, Twain gave a great deal of thought to this work and made extensive plans. Walter Blair describes in detail the number of books about the West that Twain consulted in preparation for the story,³⁷ including Richard Irving Dodge's The Plains of the Great West and Their Inhabitants and his Our Wild Indians: Thirty-three Years' Personal Experience Among the Red Men of

the Great West. (In the latter Twain wrote 375 notes in the margin.³⁸) Many parallels between Twain's story and his sources can be seen, including the names of characters, descriptions, and even a number of events.³⁹ In evident preparation for the publication of the "Indians" sequel, Twain even went so far as to have a change made in its predecessor, Huckleberry Finn, in order for the earlier book to conform to the planned later one. He had his business agent "alter the title page of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn so that it would read 'Time, forty to fifty years ago' instead of 'Time, forty years ago.'" This "probably reflected Twain's realization that the incidents he was borrowing from his 'Injun books' dated from the mid-1830's, not the mid-1840's of his childhood."⁴⁰

The opening events of "Huck and Tom Among the Indians" conform quite closely to the plan mentioned by Tom Sawyer at the end of Huckleberry Finn. After some complications, Huck and Jim head off into the wilderness west of Missouri for their "howling adventures." This occurs, though, only after Tom has naively described Indians as "the noblest human beings that's ever been in the world."⁴¹ He continues with a several-page peroration on the virtues of the Red Man. Tom's statement, significantly, overcomes Jim's objections to the scheme and convinces him to come along. "Jim's eyes was shining," says Huck at the end of Tom's speech, "and so was mine, I reckon, and he was excited."⁴² Huck simply comes along since the other two are now going.

The fact that Tom convinces Jim to come along on the expedition against his better judgement creates the same sort of moral indebtedness owed by the boy to the black man that had existed by the end of the "Evasion" episode in Huckleberry Finn. In the "Indians" fragment, though, Tom will not be able to buy his way out by the payment of a mere forty dollars (as he does at the end of that novel), as the events of the story make clear. Twain carefully constructs the next several chapters in order to make this point obvious. Once out on the lonely plains, the trio links up with a pioneer family heading towards Oregon. In the group's first encounter with Indians a few days later, it seems that all of Tom's ideals about them are true. Says Huck, "Tom he was just wild over the Injuns, and said there warn't white men so noble; and he warn't by himself in it, because me and Jim, and all the rest of us got right down fond of them."⁴³

But the Indians' sudden, cold-blooded massacre of most of the Mills family, and the kidnapping of Jim and the two Mills daughters, is meant to destroy Tom's illusions about them. Significantly, Tom's illusions are destroyed, and the boy recognizes the destruction. This recognition is far more explicit than had occurred in the preceding novel. There, Tom had not seen any of the events of the "Evasion" episode (even being shot himself) as challenging any of his naive, romantic conceptions of life. Here, when Huck asks Tom deliberately,

"Tom, where did you learn about Injuns-- how noble they was, and all that?"

He give me a look that showed me I had hit him hard, very hard, and so I wished I hadn't said the words. He turned away his head, and after a minute he said "Cooper's novels," and didn't say anything more, and I didn't say anything more, and so that changed the subject.⁴⁴

This painful admission by Tom is a major step in the process of his maturation. It is not simply an expression of Twain's "belief that Cooper's Indians are falsely drawn and that actual Indians are scoundrels,"⁴⁵ as Blair would have it. Rather, it is an admission by Tom that he is finally aware that there is a discrepancy between the real world (in which evil exists and suffering occurs), and the book-derived, make-believe world in which he has lived as a child for so long.

Additionally, another aspect of Tom's response to the terrible massacre shows how much he has learned by this event. As we have seen, Tom persuades Jim to go on this expedition through the intensity of his own belief in "Cooper's" Indians. Now, when the Indians have destroyed this image of themselves, Tom immediately accepts the responsibility of what he has done to Jim and is willing to atone for his action, thus showing another component of maturity. In fact, he carefully discriminates between what he has done and Huck's role in the events: "I got Jim into this scrape," Tom says explicitly, "and so I ain't going to turn back towards home till I've got him out of it again, or found out he's dead; but you ain't in fault,

like me, so if we run across any trappers bound for the States--."

Huck cuts him off before he can suggest that Huck return to civilization by himself, leaving Tom to pursue Jim alone. But the fact that Tom could even contemplate making this offer shows the emotional distance he has travelled since the end of Huckleberry Finn. Interestingly, the depth of Tom's sudden commitment to Jim is emphasized by the contrast between his reaction to the events and Huck's. The latter, after Tom gives his plan to pursue Jim, replies, "I want to help save Jim, if I can, and I want to help save Peggy [Mills], too. She was good to us, and I couldn't rest easy if I didn't."⁴⁶ Jim is dismissed by Huck in a single sentence, while he indicates that his real concern in pursuing the Indians is finding the seventeen year-old Peggy.

The comment by Tom that he feels responsible for what has happened to Jim is the furthest extent to which this aspect of the theme of maturation is taken in this story. Subsequent events in it introduce the idea of human sexuality, an aspect of maturation, in perhaps the most explicit form that Twain ever managed in a story intended for a general audience. The author's complex attitude towards this subject has been the focus of a number of different studies, most notably Alexander E. Jones' "Mark Twain and Sexuality."⁴⁷ However, Jones was unfamiliar with the "Indians" fragment and many of his comments follow DeVoto's somewhat misleading thoughts on the subject. For

example, the latter remarks about one aspect of Twain's attitude: "He was almost lustfully hypersensitive to sex in print. . . . His timorous circumlocutions, published and unpublished, are astonishing. . . . There is no evidence that he thought of [boyhood] as otherwise than sexless."⁴⁸

Superficial readings of the Huck and Tom stories would seem to support this idea. Without question sex plays an almost invisible role as far as explicit motivation for any of the boys' actions in the surviving stories is concerned. Stone, following DeVoto, comments about Tom Sawyer in this regard: "Time and Change are to be resisted, and sex would mean growing up," and therefore the boys are "pre-sexual."⁴⁹ Yet if one of Twain's concerns in the stories was the maturity of the boys, it would seem logical that an awareness of human sexuality should play a part in their lives; and certainly in the "Indians" story--as well as in some later notes for future stories--this development can be seen.

In order to display the utter depravity of the Indians, Twain--following his sources⁵⁰--makes the point quite evident that the Indians kidnap Peggy Mills in order to sexually abuse her. At one point, in fact, he indicates that they have tied her down and gang-raped her.⁵¹ The terms he uses to describe these events are certainly "timorous" and vague. Nonetheless, it is obvious that Huck has an awareness and understanding of sex, and conveys this knowledge to Tom Sawyer. As the story un-

folds, Brace Johnson, Peggy's fiancé, makes plain that he wanted her to commit suicide if she were captured, to avoid being raped. His insistence that Peggy must commit suicide causes confusion for Huck until he finds out why. The issue is described indirectly. Huck says: "I up and asked Brace if he actually hoped Peggy was dead; and if he did, why he did. He explained it to me, and then it was all clear."⁵² Later on, Huck has to explain the same point to Tom, and he does so in the same indirect terms: "At last I come out with it [the reason why Brace thinks Peggy must commit suicide] and then Tom was satisfied."⁵³

Twain of course does not describe either conversation in detail, but the meaning is clear. Significantly, neither boy reacts to this knowledge with anything resembling shock, surprise, or undue disturbance. Both seem to understand that sexual desire can form one of the motivations for human action. In fact, they seem much less upset at what may be happening sexually to Peggy, and much more concerned that she remain alive than the older, more experienced Brace. As the story progresses, the boys play elaborate charades to make him think she has killed herself. At the same time, when a flash flood endangers them all, Huck comments, "Me and Tom was down-hearted and miserable on account of Jim and Peggy and Flaxy, because we reckoned it was all up with them and the Injuns, now."⁵⁴ In their implicit, humanistic rebuke of the rigidity of Victorian views of female sexuality, the boys might even be said to be more mature

than Brace, who evidently believes quite strongly in "a fate worse than death."

This relatively frank exploration of human sexuality from an adolescent's point of view may have been one of the reasons why the story was abandoned shortly after the boys and Brace discover four stakes in the ground and a bloody piece of Peggy's dress, clear indications that she is still alive and at the mercy of her captors. Paul Delaney, one of the few commentators on this work, perceptively notes the difficulties that Twain must have suddenly found himself in by exploring this theme:

Huck can witness such evils as murder, grave-robbing, graft, fraud, hypocrisy-- but they do not affect him because he is in no way part of them. But to a fourteen- or fifteen-year-old boy a knowledge of sexual evil is fundamentally different. Perception of such an evil involves a recognition of the inter-relatedness of one's own desire with a universal experience which can somehow result in the horror of Peggy Mills being ravished between four stakes.

"Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer among the Indians" thus reveals Mark Twain struggling to depict the fate of his boyhood character coping with greater insights than his innocent eye could comprehend.⁵⁵

Twain may have given up this work because of discomfort at what he suddenly found himself discussing. But his recognition of this theme, however hesitating, incomplete and circumlocutory it may have been, seems to me to have been an extraordinary step forward for the writer. It was a theme, though, that had been

anticipated in earlier works about the boys and one that would reappear in later ones.

Sexuality as a factor in human behaviour is visible as early as Tom Sawyer. In that novel occurs the incident between Tom and Becky Thatcher over the nude picture in the school-master's anatomy book, which has clear sexual undertones. In the original account of the incident, before it was changed at William Dean Howells' suggestion,⁵⁶ Tom was allowed to comment, "How could I know it wasn't a nice book? I didn't know girls ever--" The sentence is left suggestively half-finished, but later on Tom thinks, again implying his (and Twain's) awareness of adolescent sexual curiosity, "But that picture--is--well, now it ain't so curious she feels bad about that. No ... No, I reckon it ain't."⁵⁹

In the published version of the novel, admittedly, this incident is considerably shortened and much of its significance is lost (Becky's discomfort stems from the fear of being whipped for tearing the page of the book, not over what she has been caught seeing). But there remains in the book the matter of Injun Joe's revenge on the Widow Douglas. This also has been "sanitized" for a child audience: Joe states, "When you want to get revenge on a woman you don't kill her--bosh! you go for her looks. You slit her nostrils--you notch her ears, like a sow's!"⁵⁸ But for an adult, it would seem clear, as Dixon Wecter remarks, that Joe's real intention in this incident is

not simply mutilation, but "rape or at least sexual affront."⁵⁹ In fact, later on Joe threatens suggestively, "I'll tie her to the bed."⁶⁰ This threat once more indicates Twain's willingness to hint at sexuality as a factor in human actions.

But none of these incidents plays a great role in the topic of Tom's maturity in this book. Near the end, he and Becky wander alone for several days in the dark cave without the slightest suggestion of anything "more subtle on their mind (or on yours, reading) than cold, hunger, darkness, loneliness, pitfalls, and a desperado who would kill them," as George P. Elliott remarks.⁶¹ But at the same time, the novel is hardly devoid of an awareness of human sexuality and the problems it can create.

Similarly, in Huckleberry Finn sexuality plays no overt role in the actions of most of the characters. Yet it provides an undertone to many of the incidents, especially in Twain's manuscript of the story, in which many comments were quite explicit. Most of these remarks were changed in the published novel, yet the fact that they were present in the manuscript certainly indicates that Twain allowed himself to think of Huck (who, after all, is the narrator of all these incidents) as a sexually knowledgeable individual, and of sexual awareness as an aspect of growing up. DeVoto's comments on the changes Twain made in the manuscript illustrate how clearly the idea of sexuality was visible in the original version:

Kings are not permitted to "wallow around the harem," as he originally wrote, but instead must more decorously "hang around." ... Similarly, in three different passages the king's satisfaction in kissing the Wilks girls is deleted and Mary Jane is not even permitted to kiss him "on the mouth." More flagrant ... is a change in Colonel Sherburn's decision of the mob that comes to lynch him. The text now reads, "Because you're brave enough to tar and feather poor friendless cast-out women that come along here ..." The single adjective "cast-out" is notable as one of the very few admissions in all Mark's works that prostitution exists, but he felt that the original sentence was too specific or too suggestive and cut out the completing phrase which he had written, "lowering themselves to your level to earn a bite of bitter bread to eat."⁶²

These changes diminish the sense of Huck's sexual awareness, but certainly do not remove it.

In the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud, as well, there is an intimation of sexual violence, foreshadowing the events of the subsequent "Indians" fragment. When young Buck Grangerford and his cousin are massacred by the Shepherdsons, Huck comments, "It made me so sick I most fell out of the tree. I ain't agoing to tell all that happened--it would make me sick again if I was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night, to see such things."⁶³ This sounds rather similar to Tom Sawyer's account to Huck of what the Indians had done to the bodies of Buck [!], Sam, and Bill Mills after the massacre: "He told me how else they had served the bodies, which was horrible, but it would not do to put it in a book."⁶⁴ In both cases, there is

at least the suggestion of sexual mutilation of the corpses, an act so horrifying to the adolescent Huck that he cannot even begin to describe it.

As in Tom Sawyer, these events in Huckleberry Finn do not play a major role in the process of Huck's maturity. Yet they indicate that in Twain's mind sexuality was an implicit part of growing up. As well, these events show that the sexual explicitness of the "Indians" fragment was not an aberration, but a logical outgrowth of concerns that had been present in the earlier works. This is born out by the fact that even after abandoning the "Indians" story, Twain continued to portray aspects of human sexuality in stories about the boys.

To be sure, there is virtually no concern with sex in Tom Sawyer Abroad, which is the first work about the boys that Twain wrote after abandoning "Indians" eight years earlier. At the same time, this story also possesses almost no concern with the theme of maturation in any form, so the absence of any mention of sex may not be surprising. The next surviving work, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," however, does present sexual desire as at least an implicit motivation for a major element of the plot. The interest that Brace Dunlap, the villain of the story, has in attractive, sixteen-year-old Benny Phelps would seem, at least to an adult (and Twain described the story as being "written for grown folk"⁶⁵), to be quite clearly sexual. The motivation for his revenge on the family, after Brace has been

turned down for Benny's hand, can be seen as jealousy. Once again, Twain does not have the boys participate in any of the sexually motivated activity (when Tom saves Uncle Silas by revealing the details of Dunlap's revenge plot, Benny rushes to kiss her father, not Tom). But in allowing the boys to observe sexual desire and sexual jealousy, the story serves as an important preparation for later stories involving the boys in which sex would play an even more dramatic role.

Notebook entries from the later 1890's show Twain planning a story in which a runaway slave rapes a white girl and then murders the girl and her brother. Then an innocent slave girl is unjustly hanged for the murder of a baby:

Whites seized the slave nurse & hanged her for poisoning the baby while another party was scouring the woods & discovered the baby's uncle in suspicious circumstances, hiding something, & charged him (Tom or Huck discovered him) & he confessed; & he arrived in custody just after the innocent slave girl had been lynched--or (shan't) Tom and Huck shall save her.⁶⁶

This note was written at the same time that Twain wrote his reminiscences of growing up in Hannibal, "Villagers, 1840-43." In this, Twain gave a "penetrating picture of the seamy underside of the St. Petersburg idyll,"⁶⁷ as Macnaughton terms it, focussing on the adulteries, murders, cohabitations, and assorted other vices of the townspeople, many of the vices specifically sexual in nature. This might indicate that Twain was quite consciously attempting to explore his memories of Hannibal as a

source for new fiction that would be qualitatively different from the works about childhood he had written earlier, fiction using much more explicitly adult themes and concerns.

It is not known how far Twain may have progressed with any of these plans for stories, but in 1902 he did begin another story about the boys, getting as far as 38,000 words in it.⁶⁸ This story, untitled and unfinished, was evidently written in two parts. The first concerned Huck, Tom and their friends as teenagers in St. Petersburg; the second was to be about their return to the village as adults fifty years afterwards. The second part is a repetition, of course, of the final point of the original 1874 outline, the return of the boys to their hometown as adults.

This narrative seems not to have survived, so it cannot be determined now what it may have contained. But the notes that Twain wrote while planning this story are very suggestive. Among them are the ambiguous note about John Briggs' "shameful" act, the list of all the "sweethearts," and notes mentioning "swings--picnics ... Doughnut party. Horse-hair snakes ... serenades."⁶⁹ The fact that Tom Sawyer's Gang was to include girls for the first time in any of the stories indicates that in this work, Twain might have intended to show the growth of normal romantic love between young men and women, rather than the platonic puppy-love of the "Boy's Manuscript" and Tom Sawyer. Later, when the boys return to St. Petersburg as adults

in the second half of the story, perhaps with children of their own, one can assume that they had developed normal adult sexual relationships as they matured.

Therefore, it is clear that sexuality played a role in Twain's thoughts and writings about Huck and Tom, at least once he had finished Tom Sawyer, with its "quality of arrested time,"⁷⁰ as Stone terms it. As we have seen, close examination of these later writings show a noticeable emphasis on sex, despite Twain's "timorous" approach to the subject. The emphasis demonstrates that the author had a sense of the importance of sexual awareness in a boy's growing up.

More noticeable than sexuality as an aspect of maturity, though, is the question of responsibility for one's own actions. This aspect of maturity is one that Twain could be much more explicit about. The issue of responsibility can be seen first in the "Indians" story, where Tom painfully recognizes the difference between his childish perception of the world derived from "Cooper's novels" and the real thing; and the theme becomes even more evident in several of the later writings about the boys.

In Tom Sawyer Abroad, a major and dangerous part of Tom's personality is made explicit for the first time. This part is his obsessive quest for "glory"--renown, fame, importance in the eyes of the community. To be sure, this desire was present

in the boy as early as Tom Sawyer where, by testifying against Injun Joe at Muff Potter's trial, Tom becomes "a glittering hero."⁷¹ But his testimony was a genuinely courageous act, given Joe's reputation, and one done in the service of a good cause. Then, in Huckleberry Finn, Tom's entire "Evasion" scheme is simply an elaborate game to pass the time and stir up excitement in the town. It displays this quality of Tom's in a new and much less attractive light.

In Tom Sawyer Abroad, Huck, once again the narrator, makes this quality of Tom's explicit from the very beginning. In the opening paragraph, he says: "Do you reckon Tom Sawyer was satisfied after all them adventures? I mean the adventures we had down the river and the time we set the darky Jim free and Tom got shot in the leg. No, he wasn't. It only just p'isoned him for more" (emphasis added).⁷² Huck's use of the word "p'isoned" both in this story and other later ones is meant perhaps to be taken almost literally. Tom's quest for glory is a kind of disease within him that can only be cured by a painful antidote.

After this promising beginning, though, very little is made of this topic in Tom Sawyer Abroad. It is Tom's desire to outshine the other prominent person in the village, the postmaster Nat Parson, that leads him (together with Huck and Jim) onto the balloon where they are kidnapped by the mad scientist. This opening certainly had possibilities similar to those of

the "Indians" story, for Tom once again has led Jim into unnecessary and avoidable danger. But soon the work declines into "more or less conventional going for the young readers of Mrs. Mary Dodge's St. Nicholas Magazine,"⁷³ for whom the story was written. Tom learns nothing in the course of the work, and undergoes no real change in personality. Perhaps significantly, Tom Sawyer Abroad is never mentioned by Twain in any of his later stories or notes about the boys, indicating that he may have realised that this mildly diverting tale was a dead end, as far as any serious exploration of themes regarding the boys was concerned.

The missing manuscript of "Tom Sawyer's Mystery," written between Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective," may have contained elements involving the maturity of Tom, but so little is known about it that it is impossible to say. The subsequent "Detective" story contains no overt lesson in moral education or responsibility. But it plainly serves as a preparation for the lesson that Tom learns in the next work in the series, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy." Twain may very well have been planning the later work as he wrote "Tom Sawyer, Detective" in January, 1895. For as we have seen,⁷⁴ his imagination was concerned in the mid-1890's with the elements of the story that would become "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy."

In "Tom Sawyer, Detective," Twain allows the boy a virtually unalloyed triumph in the familiar setting of a courtroom.

In the subsequent "Conspiracy" narrative, the author completely reverses the situation in a similar setting. In the "Detective" story, Tom is able to save Uncle Silas' life through his powers of observation, his cleverness, and his deductive ability. At the conclusion of the story, the boy is basking in the admiration of the community, and wins a \$2,000 reward. It is somewhat reminiscent of the positive ending of Tom Sawyer, where he finds the \$12,000 treasure, glories in the admiration of the Thatcher family and the townspeople, and seems pointed toward a lifetime of success and prosperity.

In contrast, the disaster that Tom experiences in "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" is so carefully plotted--and linked to the earlier work--that it indicates Twain was consciously comparing the two narratives. One shows Tom triumphant; the other shows him in despair.

The roots of the "Conspiracy" narrative may go back even further than "Tom Sawyer, Detective," in fact. In the summer of 1884, just after concluding Huckleberry Finn with the "Evasion" episode, the author jotted down in his notebook another reminiscence from his childhood in Hannibal: "Villains very scarce. Pater-rollers and slavery."⁷⁵ This, as has been noted,⁷⁶ formed the germ of the "Conspiracy" story, though only after many years of thought and several intervening inspirations.

When he began the work in the summer of 1897, thirteen years after he had first attempted to explore the same theme in

the "Indians" fragment, the author carefully focussed the work on Tom Sawyer and his dreams of glory. From the very beginning, he emphasizes that what happens in the story is entirely the responsibility of Tom. As in the "Evasion" episode, which must have been in his mind when he first noted down the plot element of "pater-rollers," Twain here has Tom concoct an elaborate, dangerous, and entirely unnecessary scheme solely out of a desire to make himself the centre of attention and to break the day-to-day monotony of life in the village.

Tom's responsibility is emphasized in the opening paragraphs of the work, in which Huck comments specifically: "It was Tom's idea to plan out something to do, me and Jim never planned out things to do, which wears out a person's brains and ain't any use anyway."⁷⁷ (Emphasis added.) A clear distinction is drawn here between Tom as the motivating force for the scheme, and Huck and Jim who merely participate in it under his direction and at his urging. This distinction is maintained throughout the work, where at crucial moments Tom will always act entirely of his own volition in an increasingly irresponsible manner.

The admittedly complex plot of the story has been the source of some controversy. DeVoto, for example, considered "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" to be "an experiment with a paralytically intricate plot"⁷⁸ and "a maze of romance and rank improvisation, wholly without structure."⁷⁹ Macnaughton, on

the other hand, believes "the first section of this story is well-plotted,"⁸⁰ and overall, "the plot ... is exciting and entertaining."⁸¹ The work certainly seems to fall into two somewhat incongruent parts, the "conspiracy" section at the beginning, and the murder mystery in the second half. But even these two divisions can be seen to have a thematic relationship with each other. The "conspiracy" section shows the townspeople of St. Petersburg as remarkably slow-witted and gullible, easily fooled by the machinations of Tom Sawyer. The second half, in contrast, shows Tom utterly humiliated in front of the same people he had toyed with so callously and thus emphasizes the extent of his downfall.

In addition, a number of comments and incidents in the first half of the story seem deliberately to foreshadow events of the second half. For example, when Tom first outlines his plan for a conspiracy, Jim exclaims, "My lan', Mars Tom! W'y dey'll hang us."⁸² At the end of the story, of course, Jim is facing hanging for a murder he did not commit. As well, when Tom suggests having a revolution, Jim wonders whether "when we got the revolution done our old king would show up and hog the whole thing." To which Huck comments, "Well, it begun to sound likely, the way Jim put it, and it got me to feeling uneasy."⁸³ At the end of the story, the King and the Duke do appear, for they are the real murderers.

There is also an ironic thematic foreshadowing when Tom suggests having a civil war, only to give it up after Jim objects. The boy's consideration of Jim on this relatively minor matter contrasts dramatically with his total lack of sensitivity towards him at the end of the story, where he manipulates Jim into almost being hanged unjustly for murder. The irony is reinforced by the almost embarrassing effusion of praise Huck heaps upon Tom in his comments on this incident:

It shows what a good heart he had; he had been just dead set on getting up a civil war, and had even planned out the preparations for it on the biggest scale, and yet he threwed it all aside and give it up to accommodate a nigger. Not many boys would a done such a thing as that. But that was just his style; when he liked a person there wasn't anything he wouldn't do for them. I've seen Tom Sawyer do many a noble thing, but the noblest of all, I think, was time he countermanded the civil war.⁸⁴

Given Tom's utterly inconsiderate treatment of Jim at the end of the story, there seems to be at least a mild degree of sarcasm in Huck's remarks here, as well as authorial irony. Huck calls Tom noble here for merely sacrificing a pet project. But as the story develops, it becomes clear that nobility is a quality that for Tom to achieve will take far more sacrifice and suffering than a meagre concession to Jim.

Earlier, Tom's basic motivation for embarking on any of his schemes was made explicit. His strongest desire is for "glory," even more than for excitement. When Tom first proposes

starting a civil war, Huck responds with characteristic scepticism, "I might a known you'd get up something that's full of danger and expense and all that." To which Tom replies excitedly,

"And glory ... you're forgetting the glory-- forgetting the main thing."

"Oh, cert'nly," I says, "it's got to have that in, you needn't tell a person that. The first time I catch old Jimmy Grimes fetching home a jug that hain't got any rot-gut in it, I'll say the next mericle that's going to happen is Tom Sawyer fetching home a plan that hain't got any glory in."

I said it very sarcastic. I just meant to make him squirm, and it done it. He stiffened up, and was very distant, and said I was a jackass.⁸⁵

"Glory," as can be seen in all of the stories involving Tom Sawyer, had a very special meaning and importance for the boy. Tom's desire for glory and renown is perhaps the single most important motivation for his action. The desire can be seen in the earliest fantasies of Tom's prototype, Billy Rogers of the 1870 "Boy's Manuscript," who wanted to return to his village in triumph as "Rogers the Pirate."⁸⁶ Later, the same motivation is evident throughout the many incidents of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer where the boy becomes the centre of attention in St. Petersburg. Later still, his triumph in the courtroom in Arkansas in "Tom Sawyer, Detective" is another example.

The difficulty that the thirst for "glory" presents in a maturing character is a complex one, which may be why Twain took so long to resolve it in Tom's case. Fantasy is useful, even necessary in the process. But the problem seems to be that the boy's dreams of glory are totally childish, with no real sense of the difficulties inherent in an adult's life. A sense of this childishness may have been what prompted DeVoto to say about Tom's dreams of piracy and circuses in Tom Sawyer, "Had he no nebulous, inarticulate vision of growing up, did he get no nearer than this to the threshold of ambition and desire?"⁸⁷ For Tom, this seems to have indeed been the case in the novel. But it may have been the resolve to force Tom to elevate his dreams that prompted Twain to create a lesson in moral education for him, a lesson that would force the boy to see the childishness and immaturity of his desires.

Whatever his conscious intentions, Twain does accomplish this advance in Tom's character in the "Conspiracy" narrative. At the beginning of the story, the conspiracy that Tom devises once more demonstrates his remarkable cleverness and imagination. These are perfectly admirable qualities, but here are used in the service of a pointless and potentially dangerous scheme. The situation, in fact, resembles the morally bankrupt "Evasion" episode of Huckleberry Finn, for Tom is capitalizing on an already existing situation in order to try to reap excitement and renown. In the earlier work, the situation was Jim's in-

carceration at the Phelps farm. Here the fear and suspicion permeating St. Petersburg over the possibility of a slave uprising is what Tom uses as the springboard for his scheme.

The utter self-centredness of Tom's present plan is shown by the fact that he is perfectly willing to use this genuine fear and anger simply for his own amusement. It does not occur to him that people might actually suffer and feel pain through what he does. He is not malicious in this; that is, he is not planning for them to suffer. Rather, he has a child's complete lack of consciousness of what the consequences of his actions might be.

We remember that for Twain one of the components of growing up, according to Blair, was becoming responsible for one's own action. This Tom has refused to do, though we saw an attempt at it in the "Indians" fragment. Here, the boy's acknowledgement of his responsibility for his own actions will occur even more explicitly--and more painfully.

An example of Tom's self-centredness--one that has parallels to similar events in earlier works--occurs when the boy deliberately contracts deadly scarlet fever. He believes this action will assist the conspiracy by forcing his troublesome brother Sid to leave town. But Tom ignores the possible consequences. Huck movingly describes what happens:

Tom was sick two weeks and got very bad, and then one night he begun to sink, and sunk pretty fast. All night long he got worse and worse, and was plumb out of his head, and babbled and babbled, and give the conspiracy plumb away, but Aunt Polly was that beside herself with misery and grief that she couldn't take notice, but only just hung over him, and cried, and kissed him, and bathed his face with a wet rag, and said oh, she could not bear to lose him, he was the darling of her heart and she couldn't ever live without him. ... And in the morning when the doctor came and looked at him and says, kind of tender and low, "He doeth all things for the best, we must not repine," she--but I can't tell it, it would a made anybody cry to see her.⁸⁸

This is reminiscent of the scene in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, where Tom runs off to Jackson's Island leaving Aunt Polly to think that he is drowned. He then returns to the village to see what effect his action has had, and watches as "Aunt Polly knelt down and prayed for Tom so touchingly, so appealingly, and with such measureless love in her words and her old trembling voice, that he was weltering in tears again, long before she was through."⁸⁹

Yet in the "Conspiracy" story, the suffering that he has deliberately caused his Aunt has no effect on him. It certainly does not cause him to change either his outlook or his plans in any way. At this stage of the work, Tom is still very much the unconscious, irresponsible child, letting nothing--certainly not the feelings of other people--stand in the way of working out his scheme.

The success of the first part of the conspiracy would seem, in fact, to suggest that Tom's point of view has some merit. He seems to be able to do anything he wants without suffering more than minor setbacks. The crudely printed handbills Tom and Huck post all around St. Petersburg warning of an imminent slave uprising have the desired effect of throwing the townspeople into a state of terror and confusion. The villagers believe "they would all wake up some night with their throats cut."⁹⁰ Subsequent handbills inflame the situation even more, revealing the suspicion and fear underlying the life of the village, and throwing everyone into a state of near-hysteria and panic. This is the high point of Tom's conspiracy, for he has been able to manipulate events exactly as he wishes in order to create the desired effect.

But now Twain begins to direct the plot of the story carefully, so that the extent of Tom's limitations in controlling events becomes clear. This development occurs when the outlines of Tom's scheme begin to go awry. The boy's original intention had been to blacken himself and pass himself off as a runaway slave to Bat Bradish, the town slave-trader. Then he would run off from Bradish, confirming the fears planted in the community by the handbills. But this part of the scheme begins to unravel when Huck discovers that Bradish already has a runaway slave to deal with, and cannot handle another one. Tom's reaction to the news, when Huck tells him of this develop-

ment, shows how inconceivable he finds a sudden barrier to his plans. Says Huck, "It just broke his heart. I knowed it would. He had been imagining all kinds of adventures and good times he was going to have when he was washed up and hunting for himself, and he couldn't seem to get over it."⁹¹

The extent of Tom's irresponsibility from this point on becomes more and more explicit. The escaped slave whom Bradish has taken charge of is also white, as Tom discovers when he examines the man while he sleeps. He is a person attempting the same fraud as Tom wished to undertake in what might be called a typically Twainian coincidence. At this crucial moment, Tom is given the opportunity to behave in a responsible, adult manner--and he deliberately throws it away. Huck suggests the proper course of action to Tom: "The thing for us to do is to rush to the sheriff's and tell him, so he can slip up here and catch this humbug and jail him for swindling Bat." But Tom still has a childish belief in his power to control events, and responds:

"You think so, do you?"

It made me feel very sheepish, but I said "Yes," anyway, though I didn't say it very confident.

"Huck Finn," he says, kind of sorrowful, "You can't ever seem to see the noblest opportunities. Here is this conspiracy weaving along just perfect, and you want to turn him in in this ignorant way and spoil it all."⁹²

At this moment, the conspiracy is abruptly changing from a boyish prank into something far more serious, but Tom refuses to recognize this.

Twain's care and skill in handling the events of this part of the story indicate the degree of thought he must have put into writing it with the aim of teaching Tom something about maturity. The events that follow the boy's decision not to turn the fraudulent slave in confirm the seriousness of what is happening. Bat Bradish is killed by the "slave" shortly afterwards, and Jim is arrested for the murder on strong circumstantial evidence. Tom's reaction to these events shows his callousness, his lack of empathy for those close to him. As Huck describes it, "Tom's face lit up pious and happy--it made me shiver to see it.... Tom says, kind of grateful, 'Ain't it beautiful, the way it's developing out?--we couldn't ever thought of that, and it's the splndidest design yet."⁹³

Tom sees the tragic event, in fact, as just another opportunity to reap more "glory," though the fate of his friend hangs in the balance. Instead of immediately going to the sheriff and telling what he knows about the crime, Tom deliberately conceals his knowledge of the crime and even invents a "motive" for Jim to have killed Bradish, to make the case against Jim even stronger. This cold-hearted manipulation of the black man is only the last example of Tom's callousness towards him. The boy's unthinking behaviour toward Jim began with the

"Evasion" episode in Huckleberry Finn, continued in "Huck and Tom Among the Indians," and even included the kidnapping of Jim and the boys by the mad scientist in Tom Sawyer Abroad. The similarity of this motif persisting in all these stories indicates that Twain was aware of this streak of callousness in Tom's personality. But here in the "Conspiracy" story he will force Tom to acknowledge it as well.

Tom's new plan now involves emulating as closely as possible the events that took place in Arkansas in "Tom Sawyer, Detective," for he hopes to reap the same kind of triumph here in St. Petersburg that he garnered there. Twain carefully links the two stories together, in fact, as the narration makes clear. Huck tries to persuade Tom, before it is too late, to tell the sheriff what he knows, rather than wait until Jim's trial, but the boy will have none of it. "He wanted to get the [murderers] into the court without them suspicioning anything--and then make the grand pow-wow, the way he done in Arkansaw. That Arkansaw business had just pisoned him, I could see it plain."⁹⁴

Yet Tom's refusal to follow Huck's well-meant and responsible advice is his last moment of immature self-confidence. The next day, when the boys return to the hide-out of the murderers, just to make sure the men are still there, they discover to their horror that the murderers are gone. This moment, like the massacre of the Mills family and the kidnapping of Jim in the "Indians" story, is an instant of overwhelming self-

knowledge for Tom, and Huck's narration of the event makes this painfully explicit:

I just fell flat, where I was. Everything was swimming, it seemed to me that I was going to faint. Then I let go and cried, I couldn't help it and didn't want to. And Tom was crying, too, and said--

"What did I ever do it for? Huck what did I do it for! I had them safe and could a saved Jim spite of anything anybody could do, if I only hadn't been a fool. Oh, Huck you wanted me to tell the sheriff, and I was an idiot and wouldn't listen, and now they've got away and we'll never see them again, and nothing can save Jim, and it's all my fault, I wish I was dead."⁹⁵

Tom's self-recognition, and the explicit acknowledgement of his responsibility for what has happened, is almost unbearable in this scene, and Huck's narrative commentary reinforces the boy's anguish:

He took it so hard, and said so many hard things about himself that I hadn't the heart to say any myself, though I was going to, and had them on my tongue's end, but you know how it is, that way. I begun to try and comfort him, but he couldn't bear it, and said call him names, call him the roughest names I knowed, it was the only thing that could do him any good.⁹⁶

Twain's skill in developing this theme is shown by the fact that as the story continues this moment is only the beginning of a painful period of moral growth and maturity for Tom. This instant of self-awareness--when he discovers the murderers are gone and Jim is doomed--is still only a private incident, be-

tween himself and Huck. But as Tom's triumphs were invariably public ones (we think immediately of such episodes as his return to his own funeral in Tom Sawyer or his day of glory in Arkansas in "Tom Sawyer, Detective"), so must the extent of his humiliation be made public as well. The balance of the story is carefully crafted by Twain to enable this development to occur.

In his near-hysteria at discovering that the two murderers have disappeared, Tom develops various theories as to where they might have gone. In order to follow one possible trail, he and Huck board a steamboat heading down the river, where Huck abruptly encounters the King and the Duke, the two con-men from Huckleberry Finn. As these two are the actual murderers of Bradish (as is revealed at the end), the subsequent sequence of events is handled very carefully by Twain. His skill enables the suspense to mount and forces Tom to experience a prolonged period of agony before enduring his extreme moment of humiliation and pain at the climactic moment of the story. The author builds the suspense by very clever movement of the characters. Huck has not actually seen the two men who murdered Bradish; thus when he meets the King and the Duke he can explain Jim's predicament to them in complete innocence. They, in turn, realizing they are not suspected of the crime, quickly work out a scheme for saving the freed slave.

This plan is quite in character for the two frauds. They

will go to Saint Louis and obtain forged papers claiming Jim is wanted for an imaginary murder in Kentucky some months earlier. As this "crime" will have chronological precedence over the murder of Bradish, they can merely take Jim in their custody down the river and sell him somewhere, thereby both saving his life and reaping a quick profit. Huck readily agrees to this scheme as he knows that he and Tom can steal Jim out of slavery almost immediately and take him, in a somewhat vaguely described plan, to England.

In a carefully constructed sequence, therefore, Huck returns to Tom on another part of the boat to tell him of this scheme. It naturally delights the boy. At the same time, Tom wants to see the two frauds again, as he had only caught a glimpse of them when they were tarred and feathered, and hence unrecognizable, in Huckleberry Finn. However, by the time the boys return to that part of the boat, the King and the Duke are gone, and Huck and Tom must disembark and return to St. Petersburg. If Tom had seen them, of course, his moral education would have ended abruptly, as he would have recognised them at once as Bradish's murderers, and Jim would have been saved. By postponing the moment of recognition, Twain forces Tom into a lengthy period of anxiety and fear, prolonging the agony of his self-examination.

As it is, Tom's response to the King and the Duke's plan shows the distance he has travelled in self-awareness in the

few short hours that have passed since he learned that Jim was doomed because of his childish foolishness. Not only does he willingly accede to a scheme not of his own devising, but he embraces it eagerly and even wishes to make it simpler. This change in the boy is stressed explicitly by Huck:

He said he'd got his lesson, and warn't going to throw any more chances away for glory's sake; no, let glory go, he was for business, from this out. He was going to save Jim the quickest way, never mind about the showiest.

It sounded good, and I loved to hear it. He hadn't ever been in his right mind before; I could see it plain. Sound? He was as sound as a nut, now.⁹⁷

A subsequent act of generosity by Tom confirms how much the boy has changed in this short time. He offers to buy Jim out of slavery once the King and the Duke have possession of him, with the money he and Huck had discovered in the cave at the end of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. This would avoid another tedious "escape" attempt, perhaps similar to the "Evasion" episode of the last ten chapters of Huckleberry Finn. As Tom had actually had enough money to do this all along, his offer is another clear indication of how much he has matured. He acknowledges his debt to Jim by offering once more to give the black man his freedom, but this time without any of the complications he had inflicted on him in the earlier novel.

But so far Tom's pain and anguish have only been private, shared with the empathetic Huck. His suffering needs to be made

public, as I have said, for as Tom's triumphs and successes had been shared with the community, so now must his humiliation and self-knowledge be shared as well. Therefore, as the narrative progresses, the King and the Duke--who had promised to return very quickly from St. Louis to rescue Jim from the consequences of Tom's excesses--abruptly vanish, leaving the boys to wait for them in increasing fear. Jim's trial, and seemingly inevitable conviction, are set for three weeks hence. This deadline causes Huck and Tom to travel to St. Louis to look for the two frauds in the "calaboose." But, says Huck: "By George they warn't in the calaboose, and hadn't been! It was perfectly awful. Tom was that sick that he had to set down on something--he couldn't stand."⁹⁸ The boys return to St. Petersburg, and for the ensuing three weeks Tom undergoes a form of purgatory during which he must continually endure the knowledge of his own childishness and stupidity at every moment, with Jim's hanging as the climax of the waiting.

As the three weeks pass, this process is illustrated by the change in the boy's reaction to the arrival of the daily steamboat from St. Louis. As the boat is the means by which the King and the Duke would return to St. Petersburg, and therefore the sole possibility of salvation for Tom, the boys wait for it each day. At first they are eager and impatient for its arrival. Then, as time passes, they wait with increasing hopelessness. As Huck says: "Toward the last we only went becuz we couldn't help it, and looked at the passengers without any

intrust, and turned around and went away without saying anything when they had all come ashore."⁹⁹ The contrast between the Tom Sawyer of this period, waiting hopelessly for the steamboat that he no longer believes will bring the solace he seeks, and the Tom Sawyer of the earlier part of the story, developing and stage-managing the many details of his complex conspiracy, could not be greater.

This period of anxious waiting in which guilt and anguish tear at the boy, is a fitting preparation for the climactic moment of Tom's moral education in the story. Appropriately, this moment occurs in the familiar setting of a courtroom, a place where so many of Tom's earlier moments of triumph took place. These included his sensational testimony against Injun Joe to save Muff Potter in Tom Sawyer, and his brilliant deductive work during the trial of Silas Phelps in the preceding work, "Tom Sawyer, Detective." Distinct parallels are drawn, in fact, between the trial scene in that work, and the present one. The defense counsel in the "Detective" story was "a mud-turtle of a back settlement lawyer."¹⁰⁰ Here "Jim's lawyer was a young man and new to the village and hadn't any business, becuz of course the others didn't want the job for a free nigger."¹⁰¹ Both counsellors are clearly inexperienced and barely competent, thereby enabling the focus of the events of the trial to be on Tom Sawyer, not on the defense lawyer.

In addition, the sense of Jim's trial as a major event in the ordinary life of the village is made very evident, as was Uncle Silas' trial a major event in the life of the town in Arkansas. Both trials are almost like stage plays, witnessed by an audience of excited townspeople. In the "Conspiracy" story, in fact, Twain takes pains to establish the presence of all the important members of the community in the courtroom on the morning of Jim's trial. "The court-house was jammed," says Huck. "Plenty of ladies, too--seven or eight benches of them; and Aunt Polly and Miss Watson and the Widow Douglas and Mrs. Lawson, they all set together, and the Thatchers and a lot more back of them--all of the quality."¹⁰¹ These are the respected, influential people of the village. It is in front of them that Tom Sawyer's humiliation will occur.

The intense focus on Tom in this scene is shown by the relatively little time spent in it on early procedures and the first witnesses' testimony. The prosecution and defense make opening statements--in which the evidence against Jim seems quite damning--followed by testimony of the first three witnesses. These statements are given in a few brief paragraphs of indirect quotation from Huck. They contrast dramatically with the pages of direct quotation from Tom that will be given later on.

Even Huck's own testimony is mentioned only briefly, covered in a single sentence. "Then I told all I knowed and

got back out of the way; and hadn't done no good, becuz there wasn't anybody there believed any of it, and most of them looked it."¹⁰² As is customary in all the later writings about the boys, Huck plays an almost invisible role here. Many of the same hard questions about his actions that will be asked of Tom Sawyer could have been addressed to him, though, and he would have the same difficulty in answering them. But as Huck needs no lesson in moral education, particularly in front of the entire community, the author allows him here to play a very minor role. Twain leaves the pain and anguish for Tom alone.

When Tom is finally called to the witness stand, his importance in the community is once again emphasized, as Huck's commentary makes clear:

Then they called Tom Sawyer, and people around me mumbled and said, "'Course-- couldn't happen 'thout him being in it; couldn't do an eclipse successful if Tom Sawyer was took sick and couldn't super-intend." And his Aunt Polly and the women perked up and got ready to wonder what kind of 'sistence he was going to contribute and who was going to get the benefit of it.¹⁰²

The irony that Twain establishes here, of course, is that the reputation that Tom has laboured so hard to develop is now about to be totally obliterated.

In Tom's testimony, the importance of the "conspiracy" part of the story becomes evident. Tom relates the details of his scheme to the now astonished courtroom, and the effect is

to make several prominent members of the community look extremely foolish.

Colonel Elder and Captain Sam set there looking ashamed and pretty mad, for most everybody was laughing; and when he showed that it was us that was the Sons of Freedom and got up the scarebills and stuck them on the doors, and not Burrel, which Flacker said it was, they laughed again, and it was Flacker's turn to look sick, and he done it.¹⁰³

Twain here creates a thematically appropriate balance, for as these people are now humiliated by Tom's actions, very shortly the boy himself will be totally devastated in front of all of them as a direct result of his own deeds.

Tom's tale of the conspiracy does have a generally positive effect on the villagers. As Huck notes: "it sounded honest and didn't have a made up look." But in contrast, when he comes to the ending of the conspiracy and the murder of Bradish, the mood in the courtroom swiftly changes. The townspeople's response to the boy's account of the murderers' incriminating conversation which he overheard in their hiding place, exemplifies this. "When Tom got done it was dead still, just the way it always is when people has been listening to a yarn they don't take no stock in and are sorry for the person that has told it. It was kind of miserable, that stillness."

It is at this point, when the atmosphere becomes cold and inhospitable, that the judge puts to Tom the crucial question

with which they boy has been tormenting himself for the last several weeks, ever since he discovered that the two murderers had fled and he had lost the chance to turn them in and save Jim. The judge asks explicitly: "If this is true, how is it you didn't come straight and tell the sheriff? How do you explain that?"¹⁰⁴

The judge's question is an unanswerable one for Tom, for it forces him to face publicly the terrible fact of his own irresponsibility, immaturity and stupidity. In fact, he never really does answer it. But Huck's account of the boy's response shows his value as the narrator. For Huck, who knows Tom better than anyone else in the village, is able to give a precise and insightful account of exactly what is going through Tom's mind at this profound and terrible moment:

Tom was working at a button with his fingers and looking down at the floor. It was too many for him, that question, and I knowed it. How was he going to tell them he didn't do it becuz he was going to work the thing out on detective principles and git glory out of it? And how was he going to tell them he wanted to make the glory bigger by making it seem Jim killed the man, and even crowded him into a motive, and then went and told about the motive where Mr. Lawson could get on it--and so just by reason of him and his foolishness the murderers got away and now Jim was going to be hung for what they done. No, sir, he couldn't say a word. And so when the judge waited awhile, everybody's eyes on Tom a fooling with his button, and then asked him why he didn't go and tell the sheriff, he swallowed two or three times, and the tears come in his eyes, and he says, very low--

"I don't know, sir."¹⁰⁴

In this account Huck has summed up all of Tom's irresponsibility and foolish dreams, his immaturity and his childish vanity, as well as his anguish, guilt and helpless despair. All of these qualities have been made evident to Huck and the reader. They remain unknown, however, to the general public of St. Petersburg, though Tom's performance on the witness stand serves to humiliate him in front of them. Twain was unwilling or unable to have Tom at this moment burst out the true motive for his silence in a great climactic scene, which would obviously be the final, public step in his moral education.

The author may have decided that Tom could not realistically be expected to move so far all at once, and that therefore his silent humiliation in this scene would have to suffice as a lesson in moral education. Huck's analysis, making Tom's self-knowledge clear to the reader, takes the place of a public confession by Tom of his monstrous childishness. Twain may have felt that the fact that Tom and Huck and the reader all knew the extent of the boy's irresponsibility was sufficient. As well, the fact that Tom would forever have to bear the townspeople's conviction that not merely was he a liar, but an incompetent one at that may have seemed to Twain enough of a public humiliation.

In any event, this moment in the trial is clearly a coming of age for Tom Sawyer, as Huck Finn's "go to hell" speech in his Adventures was for that boy. Tom has finally acquired self-

knowledge and an awareness of his own irresponsibility and immaturity. In a sense, although it is Jim who is at the bar here, it is Tom who discovers himself on trial for his own limitations.

A sense of despair is vividly conveyed in Huck's description of what happens immediately after Tom utters his self-lacerating reply to the judge: "I don't know, sir." He comments in a single, rhythmically rivetting, stylistically appropriate sentence:

It was still again for a minute, then the lawyers made their speeches, and Mr. Lawson was terrible sarcastic on Tom and his fairy tale, as he called it, and so then the jury fetched Jim in guilty in the first degree in two minutes, and old Jim stood up and the judge begun to make his speech telling him why he'd got to die; and Tom he set there with his head down, crying.¹⁰⁴

The image of Jim stoically accepting his fate while Tom sits over to one side weeping for his own guilt and loss of innocence is the final overwhelming gauge of how much Tom has learned and suffered in the course of the narrative to this point.

It is in this image, too, that a reason can be seen for Twain's sudden abandonment of the story a few paragraphs later. The King and the Duke return at this moment, and Tom quickly recognizes them as the real murderers. But this turn of events presented Twain with what was evidently an impossible choice.

To ensure that the full extent of Tom's irresponsibility be impressed upon the boy, it would be necessary for the innocent Jim to die--a sacrifice to Tom's vanity and childish games-playing. Yet that may have seemed too high a price to pay, and for this reason, perhaps, at the last moment Twain brings the two frauds back to save Jim. But assuming that Tom identified them as the murderers, as he is on the point of doing when the narrative breaks off, it is possible that he would reap a modest measure of glory from the astonished community even after all he has done; and that would jeopardize his hard-learned lesson in responsibility. Twain may have decided simply not to try to resolve this dilemma, and so abruptly left the work unfinished.

The next work about the boys that Twain embarked upon evidently showed them quite explicitly as grown-up men. This is the "Fifty Years After" manuscript referred to by Howells,¹⁰⁵ which seems not to have survived. Details of this narrative are not known. But from the surviving notes and comments on this work,¹⁰⁵ it seems clear that it embodied the final point of the original 1874 outline and concerned Tom's return to the village as an adult. Of course, in view of the intervening stories and notes about the boys, the work was very likely quite different from what Twain had originally intended thirty years before. But the existence of this work shows that Twain's original plan to bring a boy to manhood was still present in his mind. The theme of maturation, therefore, was a persistent

one through all these years. It can be seen in all these works, even though the author temporarily changed his emphasis in both Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. The persistence of the theme in Twain's fiction about the boys over three decades shows the strength of his desire to bridge the gap left in these stories between childhood potentiality and adult participation in the world.

NOTES

- ¹ See pp. 47-48.
- ² Hill, p. 386.
- ³ Hill, pp. 386-387.
- ⁴ Hill, p. 387.
- ⁵ DeVoto, Work, p. 49, n. 1.
- ⁶ Hill, p. 391.
- ⁷ Blair, "Structure," pp. 75-79.
- ⁸ Blair, "Structure," p. 83.
- ⁹ Blair, "Structure," p. 84.
- ¹⁰ Blair, "Structure," pp. 84-85.
- ¹¹ Blair, "Structure," p. 88.
- ¹² Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, in Gerber, p. 237.
- ¹³ See pp. 49-51.
- ¹⁴ Smith and Gibson, I, 92.
- ¹⁵ DeVoto, Work, p. 53.
- ¹⁶ DeVoto, Work, p. 54.
- ¹⁷ DeVoto, Work, pp. 54-55.

- 18 See p. 46.
- 19 Kaplan, p. 181.
- 20 Kaplan, pp. 180-181.
- 21 Chadwick Hansen, "The Character of Jim and the Ending of Huckleberry Finn," Massachusetts Review 5 (1963), 45-66.
- 22 Clemens, p. 11.
- 23 Clemens, p. 46.
- 24 Clemens, p. 71.
- 25 Clemens, pp. 71-72.
- 26 Clemens, p. 74.
- 27 Clemens, p. 168.
- 28 Leo Marx, "Mr. Eliot, Mr. Trilling, and Huckleberry Finn," American Scholar 22 (1953), 428.
- 29 Marx, 429.
- 30 Stone, p. 195.
- 31 See Albert Bigelow Paine, ed., Mark Twain's Autobiography (New York: Harper, 1924), I, 123-125, for Twain's comments on his mother's attitude towards slavery. Despite her kindness and humanity, Jane Clemens never once questioned the institution itself.
- 32 Blair, p. 83.
- 33 Clemens, pp. 225-226.
- 34 See p. 58.
- 35 Clemens, p. 226.

- 36 See pp. 58-59.
- 37 Blair, "Introduction," pp. 84-87.
- 38 Blair, "Introduction," p. 85.
- 39 Blair, "Introduction," pp. 85-88.
- 40 Delaney, pp. 216-217.
- 41 Twain, "Indians," p. 94.
- 42 Twain, "Indians," p. 96.
- 43 Twain, "Indians," p. 102.
- 44 Twain, "Indians," p. 109.
- 45 Blair, "Introduction," p. 90.
- 46 Twain, "Indians," p. 108.
- 47 Alexander E. Jones, "Mark Twain and Sexuality," PMLA
71 (1956), 595-616.
- 48 DeVoto, Work, p. 15.
- 49 Stone, pp. 67-77.
- 50 Blair, "Introduction," p. 87.
- 51 Twain, "Indians," pp. 136-137.
- 52 Twain, "Indians," p. 113.
- 53 Twain, "Indians," p. 118.
- 54 Twain, "Indians," p. 135.
- 55 Delaney, p. 227.

- 56 DeVoto, Work, p. 14.
- 57 Quoted in DeVoto, p. 14.
- 58 Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 198.
- 59 Dixon Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), p. 158.
- 60 Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 199.
- 61 George P. Elliot, "Afterword," in Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (New York: The New American Library, 1959), p. 224.
- 62 DeVoto, Work, p. 84.
- 63 Clemens, p. 94.
- 64 Twain, "Indians," p. 107.
- 65 Quoted in Gerber, p. 349.
- 66 Quoted in Macnaughton, p. 361.
- 67 Macnaughton, p. 34.
- 68 DeVoto, Eruption, p. 199.
- 69 Quoted in Blair, "Introduction," p. 16-18.
- 70 Stone, p. 77.
- 71 Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 173.
- 72 Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad, in Gerber, p. 255.
- 73 Kaplan, p. 314.
- 74 See p. 73.

75 Browning, III, 30.

76 See pp. 73-74.

77 Mark Twain, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, p. 164.

78 DeVoto, Work, p. 48.

79 DeVoto, Work, p. 113.

80 Macnaughton, p. 39.

81 Macnaughton, p. 115.

82 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 174.

83 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 176.

84 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 166.

85 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 165.

86 Mark Twain, "Boy's Manuscript," in DeVoto, Work, p. 37.

87 DeVoto, Work, p. 21.

88 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 182.

89 Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 129.

90 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 196.

91 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 202.

92 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 205.

93 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 213.

94 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 218.

- 95 Twain, "Conspiracy," pp. 218-219.
- 96 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 219.
- 97 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 227.
- 98 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 235.
- 99 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 236.
- 100 Twain, "Detective," p. 401.
- 101 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 237.
- 102 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 238.
- 103 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 239.
- 104 Twain, "Conspiracy," p. 241.
- 105 Howells, p. 90.
- 106 Blair, "Introduction," pp. 16-19.

CHAPTER IV

Other Themes

Other themes, ideas, and motifs are prominent in the later Huck and Tom stories, in addition to the theme of maturation. Their significance lies in the parallels and differences between Twain's treatment of these ideas in the Huck and Tom stories and in his other later fiction. A comparison between the two can help to illuminate Twain's thoughts on these ideas and perhaps clarify some aspects of his later works, both published and unpublished.

Among these themes are the "matter of Hannibal" and the "Transcendent Figure" (as defined by Henry Nash Smith¹), the workings of Providence, and the attack on Romanticism. There is not a single work involving Huck and Tom in which at least one of these themes is not present. As with the theme of maturation, the persistence with which the author treats these ideas over a period of many years would seem to demonstrate once more the remarkable hold that the world of Huck and Tom had on him over several decades.

The most prominent of these themes is the "Matter of Hannibal." It was first discussed by Smith in his "Mark Twain's

Images of Hannibal: From St. Petersburg to Eseldorf" which charts the changing image of the small town in Twain's fiction from Tom Sawyer to the Mysterious Stranger. Twain begins, Smith points out, with a perception of St. Petersburg as virtually Edenic, "a village of absolute innocence." Even the most unsavoury aspects of the town, the Injun Joe-Muff Potter episode, are not really a part of the life of the village; "they are stage properties."²

The change in image of the small town begins in Huckleberry Finn, especially in those parts written after 1880. This can be seen particularly, Smith points out, in the contrast between the St. Petersburg of the earlier novel and the squalid little village of Bricksville, where Colonel Sherburn shoots Boggs, in the later one. The contrast is emphasized by the "whiteness" of St. Petersburg and the "dingy and weather-beaten" colour of Bricksville: "One suspects that St. Petersburg has been whitened and Bricksville darkened in colour mainly by projected emotion. Mark Twain meant to affirm St. Petersburg; he means to reject Bricksville."³

The darkening of the small town image continues in Twain's next novel, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. Here, as Smith demonstrates, King Arthur's Britain resembles Twain's perception of the ante-bellum South. It is contrasted unfavourably with the Yankee's progressive democracy, modelled upon late 19th-century New England.⁴ The

little villages of Britain are described as squalid and poverty-stricken. The changes that the Yankee would bring to them involve industrialization, exploitation, and "progress," all altering them irredeemably. This is a process that Twain, in the novel, seems to support.

Works of the 1890's confirm the increasingly negative view of village life. We see it most prominently in the novel Puddn'head Wilson (1893) and the story "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" (1899), where the small town is shown not to be a place of innocence, but the site of hypocrisy, greed, and a fundamental evil. The contrast with the white-hued St. Petersburg of Tom Sawyer could not be greater. Finally, in The Mysterious Stranger Twain brings a supernatural figure into the placid life of a village in order to point out what he believes are truths about human existence.

The contrast that Smith draws in this article is between the paradigmatic purity and innocence of Tom Sawyer's St. Petersburg and the increasingly unattractive versions of the village in the later writings. All of these later versions, however, are given different names: Bricksville, Pokeville, Dawson's Landing, Hadleyburg, Eseldorf. The implication seems to be that "St. Petersburg"--the name and the town--remained for Twain an embodiment of the positive memories of Hannibal. Negative memories of this same town were incorporated into communities with different names. For as Smith observes,⁵

Twain's recollections of the real Hannibal included some very post-Edenic episodes, as is demonstrated in his account of life there in the 1840's, "Villagers of 1840-3."⁶

Looking at the later stories involving Huck and Tom, however, one sees that even when stories are set in St. Petersburg, that town begins to resemble the unattractive communities portrayed in other stories under other names. In "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," for example, St. Petersburg resembles Puddn'head Wilson's Dawson's Landing far more closely than it does the St. Petersburg described as a "Delectable Land"⁷ in Tom Sawyer. This change would seem to demonstrate that St. Petersburg did not remain a fixed entity associated only with childhood innocence in Twain's imagination. As the author's perceptions changed, the description of the village also altered to reflect these changing perceptions. This alteration in St. Petersburg may also be related to Twain's interest in the boys' maturation. To regard a town as a place of innocence is quite appropriate for small children. But as children grow older their perceptions change and enlarge. Therefore, it is not surprising that their understanding of life in the village might also change. The descriptions of St. Petersburg in the later Huck and Tom stories seem to demonstrate this more sophisticated perception.

This process is not visible in the first of the later stories, "Huck and Tom Among the Indians," for the boys spend virtually no time in St. Petersburg in this work. However, in

the next story in the sequence, the published novella Tom Sawyer Abroad, there is a brief glimpse of the town before the boys and Jim embark on their balloon ride. The view given suggests that there is an undercurrent of fear and suspicion in the placid little village. Huck comments about the townspeople's reaction to the odd behaviour of Nat Parsons, the postmaster:

Of course, people got to avoiding him and shaking their heads and whispering, because, the way he was looking and acting, they judged he had killed somebody or done something terrible, they didn't know what, and if he had been a stranger, they would've lynched him.⁸

The casual, matter-of-fact tone in which Huck mentions this provincial hostility emphasizes the potential for brutality and violence in the village. The town now suddenly seems to share qualities with Bricksville or Pokesville rather than resemble the St. Petersburg of Tom Sawyer.

It is impossible to tell how the lost manuscript, "Tom Sawyer's Mystery," written in 1893, might have treated this theme, but the fact that the story concerned "mysterious murders"⁹ and took place in the summer (when the boys would be out of school) indicates that it was perhaps set in a fear-stricken St. Petersburg possibly resembling the description of the town in the later "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," with its vigilantes and morbidly suspicious townspeople.

By comparing the next work, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," with the earlier Huckleberry Finn, we can see an explicit contrast between Twain's treatment of the same village in an earlier work and in a later one, though the village is not St. Petersburg. It is the unnamed town in Arkansas where the Phelps family live and where Jim is imprisoned in the earlier novel. Of course, even the description given of the community in Huckleberry Finn is not especially attractive. The town seems to resemble more the tired villages along the river that Huck had visited during the course of his voyage than the edenic St. Petersburg. There is also a surprising degree of fear and brutality in the town even in the earlier novel. The inhabitants are quick to fear the attack of an imaginary "desperate gang of cutthroats"¹⁰ stealing Jim away. The villagers immediately assemble, all heavily armed, to repel the supposed attack, although it is only the product of Tom Sawyer's imagination. Their behaviour indicates that there was already for Twain a certain degree of tension permeating village life.

But in "Tom Sawyer, Detective" the level of fear is greater and the undercurrent of brutality and violence runs far closer to the surface. As Stone comments, in the "Detective" story the town "has been transformed into a nightmarish feuding ground. Tom and Huck move in a miasma of suspicion, fear, and confusion."¹¹ Twain's sense of the small town as a source of evil rather than as a paradise, is made dramatically evident by the events of the story. The overwhelming tedium of life

in the village is demonstrated by the fact that the townspeople welcome any diversion from their day-to-day life, even a brutal murder. When Uncle Silas is arrested for the supposed murder of Jubiter Dunlap, none of the townspeople makes any effort to defend him. All seem perfectly willing to believe he is guilty, even though it would seem impossible that mild and sweet-tempered Uncle Silas could commit such a crime.

Silas' trial for murder, in fact, seems to be regarded by the villagers as nothing more than an amusing entertainment put on for their benefit. The idea that people are suffering from it (the Phelps family) does not seem to enter anyone's mind. During the trial, the villagers react with titillated horror to the most lurid and emotional of the various witnesses' testimony, as Huck's narration makes plain. After each particularly telling point, the boy makes comments such as, "It kind of froze everybody's blood to hear it,"¹² or "It made the people shiver."¹³

Twain's portrayal of the townspeople as insensitive and callous participants in the degradation and humiliation of the Phelps family is a dramatic contrast to the characterization of the inhabitants of St. Petersburg in Tom Sawyer. The villagers in the "Detective" story resemble far more the unruly mob faced down by Colonel Sherburn in Huckleberry Finn than they do the essentially good-hearted folk of the earlier novel. It seems evident from this change that the ambience

of the Huck and Tom stories was hardly immune from the same changes in Twain's attitude that other works of this period demonstrate.

This change in attitude can be seen most clearly, perhaps, in the next work in the sequence, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy." This narrative is the first involving the boys since The Adventures of Tom Sawyer that is set primarily in St. Petersburg. Nowhere else can be seen so dramatically the contrast between Twain's early and late views of the town. In the "Conspiracy" story, St. Petersburg is portrayed quite explicitly as class-ridden (with a First Family of Virginia gentry resembling that in Puddn'head Wilson's Dawson's Landing), fearful, and violent. The major difference in the two views of the town can be summed up very simply: in "Conspiracy," there is an emphasis on the tensions caused by slavery as there is not in Tom Sawyer.

Twain's discovery of the thematic importance of slavery in his work occurred, as we have seen,¹⁴ during the writing of Huckleberry Finn. In Tom Sawyer's St. Petersburg slavery, as Smith remarks, "is hardly noticeable."¹⁵ But in the "Conspiracy" story it is the major social fact in the town. The presence of slavery is the primary reason for the high degree of fear and suspicion that Tom's imaginary conspiracy arouses among the villagers. Twain suggests that Tom's game exacerbates an already present sense of guilt and injustice that the

townspeople refuse to acknowledge. Their fear and guilt is shown most dramatically when Tom and Huck post protective notes (supposedly from the conspirators) on the doors of a number of the more prominent villagers. The reaction of the townspeople crystallizes the sense of mistrust and suspicion underlying the ordinary life of the village.

[This] made another big stir, and them that had [the notes] on their doors was thankful and glad, and them that hadn't was scared and mad, and said pretty rough things about the others, and said if they warn't abolitionists they was pets of them, anyway, and they reckoned it was about the same thing. And everybody was astonished to see how the ... gang had managed to come right into town and stick up the things under the soldiers's noses; and of course they was troubled and worried about it, and got suspicious of one another, not knowing who was a friend and who wasn't; and some begun to say they believed the town was full of traitors; and then they shut up, all of a sudden, and got afraid to say anything; and got a notion that they had already said too much, and maybe to the wrong people.¹⁶

The fact that these crudely written handbills could provoke such a strong reaction from the villagers shows that Tom has unwittingly struck a strong nerve here, and Huck's commentary makes plain the depth of fear in the small town. The "Conspiracy" story is perhaps Twain's most explicit treatment of the pernicious effects that slavery has, not merely on the slaves but on the slave owners as well. The portrait of the town here is far removed--and perhaps much more accurate--than the description of St. Petersburg in the earlier novel.¹⁷

Plans for further stories about the boys might have continued this process of portraying a darker and more realistic vision of the "matter of Hannibal." There is Twain's note from the later 1890's in which he considered writing a story where an "innocent slave girl had been lynched--or ... Tom and Huck shall save her."¹⁸ Such a crime is obviously an incident that could not even have been mentioned in the original Tom Sawyer. Twain's note shows clearly the change in his conception of the village over the years since he had written that novel. Moreover, there is the lost manuscript concerning the return of the boys to St. Petersburg "Fifty Years Later." The missing story contained, no doubt, a description of the village as vastly different from the boys' idyll of the first novel. Since the major impulse of this story seems to have been Twain's own return to Hannibal in 1902, almost fifty years after he had left the town,¹⁹ it seems safe to assume that the portrayal of the village displayed some of Twain's own mature attitude toward the town.

Though these differences in the portrait of the village are inconsistent within themselves (the St. Petersburg of "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy" is different from the one in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer), the change in outlook can be seen in other of the author's work written at the same time. Smith's article points out the differences that developed in Twain's descriptions of small towns after Huckleberry Finn, including his basically negative treatment of them in such works as A

Connecticut Yankee, Puddn'head Wilson, and "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg."²⁰ What the later Huck and Tom stories prove is that these same changes occurred in the author's conception of St. Petersburg itself. Twain's own rather lurid recollections of Hannibal ("Villagers of 1840-43"²¹) suggest in his treatment of the town he moved toward a more true-to-life, if darker and more violent, characterization of the community.

In addition to the "matter of Hannibal," Smith noticed another major element in Twain's fiction, particularly the later works, that can be seen in the Huck and Tom stories. This is the Transcendent Figure, which according to Smith plays a dominant role in much of Twain's later writings. As defined by Smith, the Figures possess the following characteristics: "They are isolated by their intellectual superiority to the community; they are contemptuous of mankind in general; and they have more than ordinary power. Satan, the culmination of the series, is omnipotent."²² Smith considers Colonel Sherburn of Huckleberry Finn to be the first of these figures. Others include A Connecticut Yankee's Hank Morgan, and Puddn'head Wilson, in addition to The Mysterious Stranger's Satan. The stranger who corrupted Hadleyburg could also be regarded as one of them.

In the later Huck and Tom stories, a number of characters immediately stand out as sharing several of the traits out-

lined by Smith. Among them are Brace Johnson of "Huck and Tom Among the Indians," Number 44 of "Schoolhouse Hill," and to a certain extent, in Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective," even Tom Sawyer himself. What is noteworthy, however, is the failure of any of these characters to dominate the action of the stories they are in, as do their counterparts in the published works. (An exception, perhaps, is Number 44 in "Schoolhouse Hill." This work, however, is a version of the "Mysterious Stranger" narrative, and only incidentally a Huck and Tom story.) Also, there is a surprising tentativeness in Twain's characterization. The differences between the author's handling of the Figure in the Huck and Tom stories and in his other late fiction indicate that his interest in the "Transcendent Figure" may have been less strong than Smith suggests.

Brace Johnson in the "Indians" story, for example, has certain similarities to Colonel Sherburn of Huckleberry Finn. This is not surprising, perhaps, as "Indians" was written so soon after Twain completed the earlier novel. Johnson is superior in many ways to the average person, in his vision and his tracking and deductive abilities, for instance. His contempt for the treacherous Indians he and the boys are following is reminiscent of Sherburn's attitude towards the townspeople he confronts in Huckleberry Finn. The Colonel tells the mob, "Why, a man's safe in the hands of ten thousand of your kind--as long as it's day-time and you're not behind him."²³ In

"Indians," Huck comments about Johnson's feelings towards the natives, "When he talked about Injuns, he talked the same as if he was talking about animals; he didn't seem to have much idea that they was men."²⁴ As well, the treachery of the Indians in abruptly attacking a vastly outnumbered group of friendly whites is similar to the cowardice of a mob for which Colonel Sherburn attacks the townspeople in the earlier novel.

Brace Johnson, then, possesses at least some of the qualities of the "Transcendent Figure." But at the same time, he is given other characteristics that undermine this characterization of him. He cares deeply about at least one other human being, Peggy Mills. Also, he develops in the course of the story a certain fondness for Huck and Tom. His concern indicates that he is hardly isolated from humanity and certainly has strong feelings of affection. These feelings are shown by his reaction to the account of the attack on the Mills family, and on Peggy in particular. Huck comments: "And when we come to tell about Peggy, he couldn't stand it; his face turned as white as milk, and the tears run down his cheeks, and he kept saying 'Oh, my God, oh my God ... I shall never see her again--never never any more--my poor little darling, so young and sweet and beautiful.'"²⁵ This is hardly the response of a person who feels himself superior to, and is contemptuous of, humanity.

At the same time, the deception that Huck and Tom practice

on him regarding the supposed death of Peggy undercuts the sense of Johnson's intellectual superiority. He accepts their version of events regarding her possession of the dirk with which she was to kill herself. Later, he believes their story of finding and burying her body. He does so reluctantly, to be sure. But the fact that he is willing to deceive himself, rather than confront the unbearable possibility that she is still alive and being violated by the Indians, indicates the limitations of his capacity to face life's realities with the extraordinary toughness of a Transcendent Figure. The ease with which the boys deceive him, in fact, gives the impression that Johnson, rather than being intellectually superior, is somewhat slow about subjects that threaten him.

Since "Huck and Tom Among the Indians" was never completed by Twain, we cannot know what Brace Johnson might finally have become. But the thrust of the action--emphasizing that Tom and Huck possess knowledge of an awful fact Johnson will not confront--suggests that one conclusion of the story might have been to face him with this fact, and such a development would hardly reinforce Johnson's image as a Transcendent Figure, despite obvious similarities with such characters in Twain's canon. The ambivalence of Johnson's characterization suggests, at any rate, that Twain's conception of the Transcendent Figure was not always of the one-dimensional, almost superhuman being that it later became.

Something of the potential for more complexity in the presentation of such a character can be seen in the two published novellas, Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective." In both of these works, Tom Sawyer himself possesses some of the qualities of the Figure. But in both cases, even though the characterization is somewhat tentative and incomplete, the foundations of a convincing roundness are established. In Tom Sawyer Abroad the boy displays obvious intellectual superiority over his companions on board the mad professor's balloon, Huck and Jim. He knows a variety of information regarding navigation, for example, that the other two are not familiar with. This knowledge serves to isolate him slightly from them, and he frequently addresses the others with quite contemptuous remarks. He tells Jim at one point, "Oh, do shut up, and wait till something's started that you know something about,"²⁶ and later he calls Huck Finn a "lunkhead."²⁷

But there is no question that Tom retains a genuine affection for the other two and depends upon them in a way that prevents him from becoming totally isolated. Furthermore, Tom's own human limitations are made startlingly clear at the end of the narrative, when Aunt Polly abruptly orders them all back to St. Petersburg. As Huck comments: "So then we shoved for home, and not feeling very gay, neither."²⁸ Tom's recognition of his relationship to Aunt Polly and of her power over him can scarcely be said to conform to the omnipotent image of

a Transcendent Figure.

The only other character in this story, in fact, who shares some qualities of the Figure is the mad professor who created the mysteriously powered craft. His superiority to most people is amply demonstrated by his invention of the wondrous balloon. The craft is clearly the product of an advanced technology--so advanced, to be sure, that Twain never specifies exactly how the craft operates. But the professor's undoubted "genius" (as Huck specifically terms it²⁹) has served to separate him dangerously from the rest of humanity. He is "a lean pale feller with that soft kind of moonlight in his eyes, you know,"³⁰ comments Huck ominously in the first encounter with him. This isolation causes him to regard other people with utmost contempt. Huck describes his actions: "He could turn on them and shake his fist and say they was animals and blind."

The professor therefore possesses the superiority and contempt of the Transcendent Figure. Yet his fate in the story hardly suggests that Twain regards him as admirable in any way. The professor plunges overboard on the second night of the voyage while trying to kill Tom. Once he is gone, no further mention is made of him and there is no sense that his is an example that should be followed by anyone. One might argue, in fact, that the mad professor of Tom Sawyer Abroad is Twain's attempt to portray the dark underside of the Transcendent

Figure, in whom isolation and superiority lead only to madness and destruction, not to any kind of redemption.

As in Tom Sawyer Abroad, there is in "Tom Sawyer, Detective," the next surviving work about the boys, the same kind of partial characterization of Tom as a Transcendent Figure. In the "Detective" story, the characterization is presented in almost wholly positive terms. In solving the "murder" of Jubiter Dunlap and saving Uncle Silas from the gallows, Tom displays unquestionable intellectual superiority over the inhabitants of the village. None of them, it seems clear, could have seen the pattern between such superficially unrelated events as the murder of the real Jake Dunlap, the disappearance of Jubiter, the sudden appearance of a deaf-and-dumb stranger in the town, and the myriad other details that make up the convoluted plot of the story. As the judge at the trial of Uncle Silas says to Tom: "Not two in a million could 'a' done [this]. You are a very remarkable boy."³¹

Although Tom is obviously superior to the villagers in the story, he displays none of the contempt or isolation of the Transcendent Figure. He gets "cords of glory,"³² as Huck terms it, for his actions. But he accepts the admiration and esteem of the townspeople with remarkable grace and modesty. At the end of the story, he gives Huck half of the two thousand dollars reward money for finding the jewels "and never told anybody so."³³ Such behaviour is once again not the action of

someone who feels himself isolated from humanity.

The next story in the series, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," shows perhaps most clearly Twain's ambivalence toward the Transcendent Figure in the Huck and Tom narratives. In the two previous works, Tom Sawyer displays at least some of the characteristics of the Figure. The same is true in the "Conspiracy" narrative. In this work, Tom's imagination, cleverness and creative energy in devising and carrying out his complex plan are clearly far above the capacities of anyone else in the community. His talents are demonstrated most obviously, perhaps, in the ease with which he fools the townspeople and sends the village into a state of near panic. His superiority to the rest of the community is demonstrated here, and the implicit cruelty with which Tom plays with the genuine fears of the villagers indicates a degree of contempt in his attitude towards them.

The second half of the narrative, in which the boy's gifts and creativity lead only to humiliation and disaster, would seem to indicate that Twain may have distrusted these abilities to manipulate and exert power over other human beings. In Tom's case, the distrust is surely associated with the overriding theme of maturation present in the story. But it is noteworthy that at virtually the same time that Twain was exploring the Mysterious Stranger theme³⁴--with explicitly superhuman characters embodying the characteristics of the Transcend-

ent Figure--he was seemingly undercutting the whole concept of the omnipotent figure by arranging for the devastating humiliation of Tom Sawyer as a direct result of at least some of these same Transcendent qualities. Of course, the author may have felt compelled to turn to explicitly non-human characters (Number 44, Little Satan) in order to embody his conceptions of these qualities, precisely because of the failure of human beings to embody them fully.³⁵

Perhaps in an attempt to bridge the gap between the realism of his St. Petersburg stories and the fantastic qualities of his other later works, Twain tried twice to write a story set in the village introducing a supernatural character into it.³⁶ The major surviving fragment, "Schoolhouse Hill," shows the difficulty he had in attempting to combine the two elements.

The story begins in the world of Huck and Tom. At the school which the boys attend, along with Sid Sawyer, Becky Thatcher, and other children from the earlier novels, arrives the mysterious youth, Number 44. In the second chapter, the confrontation between 44 and the school bully, Henry Bascom, follows realistically the rules for such a situation, until the stranger beats Bascom unmercifully through supernatural means. The introduction into a child's world of a being with even greater powers than an adult but still with the innocence and appearance of a child promised potentially rich subject

matter for the narrative.

However, almost immediately--as if Twain abruptly became aware of the virtually unlimited possibilities of an omnipotent character--this idea is abandoned and 44 disappears from the world of Huck and Tom. The boys vanish from the story after the second chapter. 44 becomes involved with new characters in the village, the Hotchkiss family. When the fragment breaks off, Number 44 is working on a plan for "ameliorating the condition of the [human] race in some ways in this life."³⁷ Twain seems to have conceived of him as being almost a surrogate Christ using his powers to save humanity, rather than merely a boon companion for Huck and Tom.

Curiously, the note of November, 1898, in which Twain outlined the story he was contemplating, the action is kept much more closely focussed on the boys. The story was to include such events as little Satan's taking "Tom and Huck down to stay over Sunday in hell,"³⁸ for they were to be the only ones in the village who knew his secret. This outline might have led to a more coherent and more entertaining narrative than "Schoolhouse Hill" would have become. However, Twain never seems to have written any work incorporating these elements.

His failure to do so may have been because the task of uniting the world of the boys and the theme of the Mysterious Stranger was too difficult for the author. The Transcendent

Figure is an important element of much of Twain's later fiction, as Smith points out, but as we have seen, though there are explicit aspects of the Figure present in characters in all of the later Huck and Tom stories, the Figures are treated with hesitation and ambivalence. Twain's uncertain characterization suggests that at least as far as these works are concerned, the Figure could not be the dominant force, the centre of all of the action. In the world of the boys there were too many other elements for that to happen. The quick abandonment of the two works set in St. Petersburg and involving the Mysterious Stranger (both given up far sooner than the other two narratives on the same theme) suggests that Twain realized the world of Huck and Tom was an inappropriate setting for a story with a Mysterious Stranger.³⁹

The creation of the Transcendent Figure, particularly the omnipotent beings of the Mysterious Stranger narratives, can be seen as one of Twain's responses to the general question of the workings of fate. His interest is especially noticeable in the later writings. The author's views on the nature of human destiny varied over the years but perhaps are best summed up in John Tuckey's comments:

Mark Twain's view of the human predicament ... recognizes man as the creature of an unavailing god, a creator immensely above and remote from man--at best indifferent, at worst, vindictive. It contemplates a basely made, a destructively crafted human race that actually collaborates in its own degradation.⁴⁰

This "rather grim" perception of human destiny is one that permeates most of the author's later works, and the Huck and Tom stories are no exception.

The question of an individual's relation to fate, though, had been present in all the works about the boys from the very beginning. In the earliest narratives, it is presented in a relatively unthreatening way. For example, in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, the boys explicitly recognize powers beyond human control in their discussions of charms, rituals, witches⁴¹ and other supernatural elements. These they accept without question as having a place in ordinary life. It might be recalled that the reason Tom and Huck are in the graveyard in which they witness the murder of Dr. Robinson by Injun Joe is to act out a superstitious ritual to remove warts. This, of course, introduces one of the most important plot elements of the novel. The juxtaposition of the two events--the superstitious ritual and the murder--dramatizes the place of supernatural beliefs in the boys' world.

At the end of the book, though, a rational order of things seems to be reasserted in Judge Thatcher's admirable plans for Tom--law school and the military academy. His plans suggest that human beings can order their own destinies as they grow older, along rather conventional lines. Tom's future seems secure, at least according to the Judge, and there is no indication that Tom feels any objection--philosophically or

emotionally--to his destiny. As Walter Blair says about the ending: "He has, it appears, gone over to the side of the enemy [adults]."⁴²

But almost immediately, in Huckleberry Finn, the idea of supernatural powers controlling an individual's destiny is reintroduced. In the first chapter of that book, Huck burns up a spider in a candle flame, and at once recognizes this as a portent of misfortune: "I didn't need anybody to tell me that it was an awful bad sign and would fetch me some bad luck, so I was scared and most shook the clothes off me."⁴³

This theme, of the omnipotence of forces beyond human control, underlies much of the novel, and is seen most obviously in the character of Jim and the wisdom he possesses regarding these forces. In contrast to the situation in Tom Sawyer, these powers are almost always seen in terms of evil, not benevolence. This view is made evident when Huck and Jim, on Jackson's Island, discuss the importance of supernatural "signs."

I said it looked to me like all the signs was about bad luck, and so I asked him if there warn't any good-luck signs. He says:

"Mighty few--an' dey ain' no use to a body. What you want to know when good luck's a-comin' for? want to keep it off?"⁴⁴

As Daniel G. Hoffman comments: "The world of supernatural omens ... Jim, the runaway slave, best understands. Huck Finn is the sorcerer's apprentice. The superstitious imagination recognizes evil as a dynamic force; it acknowledges death."⁴⁵ Hoffman goes on to point out the significance of these beliefs and omens: "they are of signal importance in the thematic development of the book." Many incidents in the novel, including the quicksilver in the loaves of bread to find drowning victims, the snakeskin episode, the "trash" episode, the witches who threaten Uncle Silas's slave, and others, testify to the importance of this idea in the work.

At the end of Huckleberry Finn, however, the benevolence of fate or Providence seems to be once again established. Despite all the complications and dangers of the "Evasion" episode (all, of course, unnecessary), the ending is happy. Jim is freed; Tom survives his bullet wound with no lasting complications, and in fact starts to plan further adventures. A kind of Providential seal of approval is even given to the events of the last part of the novel by Jim, after Tom gives him forty dollars.

Jim was pleased most to death, and busted out, and says:

"Dah, now, Huck, what I tell you?--what I tell you up day in Jackson islan'? I tole you I got a hairy breas', en what's de sign un it; en I tole you I ben rich wunst, en gwineter to be rich agin; en it's come true; en heah she is! Dah, now!

doan' talk to me--signs is signs, mine
 I tell you; en I knowed jis' 's well at
 I 'uz gwineter be rich agin as I's a
 stannin' heah dis minute."⁴⁶

This good fortune seems to apply even to Huck, for with the death of Pap (which Jim now reveals to him) his six-thousand dollar fortune is secured. It would seem, then, that despite the undercurrent of evil associated with the workings of fate implicit in much of the work, there is still the possibility that Providence will bestow good luck on individuals, even as late as the conclusion to Huckleberry Finn.

Explicit commentary on the workings of fate begins to appear in the next work in the series, the fragment "Huck and Tom Among the Indians." In the discussions of the beliefs held by the Indians, Twain has Huck and Brace Johnson make suggestive remarks on the powers of forces outside human control (in this case, the good and bad gods of the Indians) and what influence individuals can have on them. Brace, in fact, despite his contempt for what he considers the natives' depravity, regards their beliefs as "such a sensible religion."⁴⁷ In this, he is reflecting the author's own feeling: "We have to keep our God placated with prayers, and even then we are never sure of him--how much higher and finer is the Indian's God."⁴⁸

As presented by Twain, the Indians' religion involves two gods, a good one and a bad one. As Huck says, the natives "never paid no attention to the good one, nor ever prayed to

him or worried about him at all, but only tried their level best to flatter up the bad god and keep on the good side of him; because the good one loved them and wouldn't ever think of doing them any harm."⁴⁹ Such a set of beliefs seems to Huck, Brace, and presumably Twain a much more sensible system than the Christian one. As Blair remarks, it provides "a logical solution for what the humourist saw as two unsolved dilemmas in Christian belief--the inexplicable combination in the Christian deity of superhuman benevolence with ferocity and the puzzling fact that men were required to fear and placate a God who purportedly loved them."⁵⁰

In addition to these comments on the Indian gods, and the suggestion that they provide a more likely way to influence human events than does the traditional western deity, there is also in the story a notable stress on negative destiny in the lives of individuals. Even Brace Johnson, who shares many of the characteristics of the Transcendent Figure, is portrayed as being at the mercy of forces beyond his control, so much so, in fact, that the mere eating of meat on Friday, contrary to his own vow, brings down a string of misfortunes not only on Brace, but on Huck and Tom as well. Once again, it seems that Twain, as in Huckleberry Finn, is demonstrating the impotence of individuals in the face of unaccountably hostile supernatural forces.

In the "Indians" story the powers acting upon the

characters are presented in almost wholly negative terms. An extraordinary chain of disasters befalls almost all of the characters. These disasters include the massacre of most of the Mills family and the kidnapping of Jim, Peggy and Flaxy, Tom's being lost on the prairie, the flash flood, and the increasing indications as the story proceeds that Peggy Mills is suffering what, for Brace Johnson, is the worst of all possible fates.

Perhaps somewhat repelled by the unrelenting bleakness of the view of the human predicament evident in the "Indians" story, Twain underplayed this element in the next two surviving works about the boys, the novellas Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective." In fact, both of these works present a fairly optimistic view of human existence.

In Tom Sawyer Abroad there are episodes of violence and suffering, such as the death of the mad professor and bloody attack on a caravan. But the balloon in which the boys and Jim float exists as a kind of insulating device, allowing them--and the reader--to remain detached emotionally from what they observe. This detachment limits the significance of threatening events. Stone points out: "The balloon itself, of course, is a new kind of raft. The three 'erronorts' drift comfortably along, elevated safely above the dangers of the desert. ... Quite clearly, Huck and his friends aloft are enacting Mark Twain's own dream of escape."⁵¹ With such a

mood dominating the novella, it is not surprising that there is no sense of the bleakness of the human condition. In addition, in Tom Sawyer Abroad there is very little commentary by any of the characters on the workings of fate or Providence. The absence of any such discussion is perhaps due to the intended audience of the work, the child readers of Mrs. Dodge's St. Nicholas Magazine. Twain may have realized that such readers would get nothing out of the kind of remarks made in the "Indians" narrative about good and bad gods. As Stone suggests, this audience may have "enabled (or forced) him to mute his destructive pessimism."⁵² The effect, in any event, is a considerably more cheerful work than the preceding one in the series, or than other works written at the same time.

Something of the same optimism permeates "Tom Sawyer, Detective." The triumph that Tom is allowed to have in this story suggests that the individual can have some control over his own fate. Through his own gifts and energy a person may achieve positive results in life. The assumption that one can possess such power is closely related to the concept of the Transcendent Figure, of course, for the Figure is somewhat removed from the normal limitations of human life. As we have seen, in this work Tom Sawyer possesses some of the qualities of the Figure. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that Tom's actions in the "Detective" story may be an expression of Twain's hope that some people, at least, can control destiny. If Tom

had not intervened, it seems evident that Uncle Silas would have been executed for a murder that never happened. His impending execution might therefore be seen as the working of not merely an indifferent god, but a malicious one as well, a god who delights in the unnecessary suffering of innocent people. The fact, then, that Tom's cleverness in working out what actually happened prevents this fate suggests some human control over destiny and contributes to the generally positive tone of the work. But this potential theme is not exploited. As Stone remarks, the "frenetically busy" plot "dominates everything. ... Even death itself is less significant than unraveling the identity of its perpetrator."⁵³ Thus there is no convincing attempt in the story to treat any serious theme so that it is not surprising that a sustained or systematic emphasis on the workings of fate, positive or negative, is also lacking.

As we have noticed in discussing the theme of maturation,⁵⁴ the events of "Tom Sawyer, Detective" are an explicit preparation for the events of the next work in the series, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy." This same preparation can be seen with regard to the workings of Providence as well. Tom's triumph in the earlier work causes him to believe that he is capable of manipulating events for his own advantage, and his belief provides the basic impetus for the plot of the "Conspiracy" story.

The conflict between destiny and human will is emphasized from the very beginning of the "Conspiracy" story. Within a few paragraphs of the opening, Tom and Jim are engaged in a discussion of the extent to which an individual can plan things in contradiction to the desires of Providence. Tom, of course, believes in the power of the individual, while Jim is very hesitant to go against what he sees as an uncontrollable destiny. The conflict is finally resolved in a somewhat ambiguous manner.

"Well, then, it's right for me to go ahead and keep planning out things till I find out which is the one [Providence] wants done, ain't it?"

"W'y sudd'nly, Mars Tom, dat's all right, o'course, en ain' no sin en no harm--"

"That is, I can suggest plans?"

"Yassah, sudd'nly, you can sejest as many as you want to."⁵⁵

Tom seems here to accept the omnipotence of an inscrutable Providence. But the subsequent events of the story suggest that in fact he believes he is in charge of his own destiny and that he is merely deferring to Jim here in order to maintain calm.

The debate between these two is significant not only because it introduces the theme so early in the narrative, but because of the participants in it. Tom, of course, is the principal of both the theme of maturation and the idea of the

Transcendent Figure. He believes he exists outside the power of supernatural forces, which as we have seen, generally manifest themselves in negative forms. Jim, on the other hand, is the spokesman and purveyor of wisdom about these forces, as was evident throughout Huckleberry Finn. The conflict between the two views is clear here; the events of the story will indicate whose vision is close to Twain's.

The awesome magnitude of the powers with which Tom is playing is stressed throughout the narrative. At first, though, they seem completely benevolent. At crucial moments in the first half of the story, events turn out even better than Tom had planned. For example, when Tom crawls into bed with Joe Harper to catch measles and thereby drive Sid and Mary out of town in order to facilitate the workings of the conspiracy, Joe's illness turns out to be not measles, but the far more dangerous scarlet fever and almost kills Tom. But this brush with death seems to the boy to be a sign of Providential favour. He tells Huck:

"What good was measles, when you come to look at it? None. ... But you take the scarlet fever and what do you find? You scour out the place, and burn up every rag when it's over and you're well again, and from that very day no Sid and no Mary can come anear it for six solid useful weeks. Now who thought of scarlet fever for us, Huck, and arranged it, when we was ignorant and didn't know any better than to go for measles? Was it us? You know it warn't. Now let that learn you.

This conspiracy is being taken care of
by a wiser wisdom than ourn, Huck.⁵⁶

There is no sense here that Tom realizes that any power possessing such benevolence might also contain equal malevolence, and suddenly turn against him.

The boy's unwillingness to imagine such a possibility is emphasized by the fact that shortly afterwards when the first signs appear that the conspiracy is going awry, Tom still keeps his faith. The original plan must be abandoned when it is discovered that Bat Bradish, the slave dealer, already has a runaway slave to cope with and would not be able to take Tom on (in blackface), as had been intended. Huck comments, presciently as it turns out: "It looked to me, in a private way, like Providence was drawing out of the conspiracy."⁵⁷ But Tom refuses to believe such a development could occur, and his faith seems confirmed when it develops that the new runaway is also white, a man playing the same trick on Bradish as Tom had intended. The boy tells Huck: "It's the very same game we laid out to play ourselves. Providence hasn't changed anything except just the person--that's all. Now I reckon you'll have trust hereafter. ... We don't know what the change is made for Huck, but we know one thing--it was for the best."⁵⁸ Once more, Tom assumes unquestioningly that Providence has only his interests at heart.

Twain, then, seems clearly to be manipulating events in the story in order to present a view of Providence as basically malevolent. Tom's naive unwillingness to conceive that Providence could turn against him tends even to dramatize the idea, and most of the events of the narrative reinforce Twain's view. Certainly the collapse of Tom's conspiracy with the slaying of Bradish and the arrest of Jim for his murder seems to exemplify the malevolent aspects of fate that were seen in much of Huckleberry Finn and throughout "Huck and Tom Among the Indians."

(The theme of negative destiny also serves the story's central purpose, that of giving Tom a lesson in moral responsibility.)

However, at the very end of the story, the fortuitous return of the King and the Duke, just in the proverbial nick of time, allows both Jim and Tom to be saved from the consequences of the boy's actions. This turn of events would seem to suggest, contrary to the thematic thrust of the second half of the narrative, that Providence is benevolent, at least towards Tom Sawyer. This contradiction may have intensified the dilemma Twain found himself in at this point in the story,⁵⁹ and perhaps provided an additional reason to abandon it so close to its conclusion.

In sum, it seems evident from these works that Twain's conception of Providence was, as Tuckey remarks, "less than consistent."⁶⁰ The author suggests a force that at the same time seems to be both utterly distant from human affairs and ma-

liciously concerned with visiting pain and suffering on human beings. Then, in the "Conspiracy" story he implies that some individuals can in fact be favoured by Providence. Other works by Twain on this same theme, works such as the "Emperor-God Satire"⁶¹ and the "Private Secretary's Diary,"⁶² reflect this same ambivalence, so that it is not surprising that the Tom and Huck stories also are not philosophically consistent. Moreover, they contain many other themes and concepts that attracted the author's interest, such as maturation and the Transcendent Figure. The presence of these elements in the stories may have prevented Twain from fully thinking out the implications of his ideas about fate and contributed to their inconsistency.

The power of Providence, then, plays an important role in almost all the Huck and Tom stories. Twain clearly wished to dramatize the workings of an inscrutable Fate on the lives of individual characters, including Tom and Huck. The overall impression is that any character, even one as creative and energetic as Tom Sawyer, is at the mercy of forces he cannot control.

Another topic in many of the stories involving the boys is Twain's attack on romanticism--or, perhaps more precisely, what Twain saw as an excess sentimentality, hypocrisy, and lack of realism in the writings of several authors, most noticeably Sir Walter Scott and James Fenimore Cooper. Hostility to their attitudes is found in many of Twain's works, of course, from

the beginning of his fiction-writing career. In fact, his first stories about children are simply satires and burlesques of conventional children's fiction of the time. Conventional stories, with their stilted, unreal characters and absurd pretension that in the end evil was punished and virtue rewarded, were easy targets for the writer.⁶³ Later, when the Huck and Tom stories developed from interests that can be seen in these early works, it is not surprising that the same attacks on unreal accounts of human behaviour continue.

Sentimentality is a prominent object of Twain's wrath, and this can be seen as early as The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. He uses the occasion of the village school graduation and the "compositions" read during the ceremony as an opportunity to make some explicit comments on the quality of these efforts: "A prevalent feature in these compositions was a nursed and petted melancholy; another was a wasteful and opulent gush of 'fine language'; another was a tendency to lug in by the ears particularly prized words and phrases until they were worn entirely out."⁶⁴ Twain justified his attack on this kind of writing by pointing out that "the pretended 'compositions' quoted in this chapter are taken without alteration from a volume entitled Prose and Poetry, by a Western Lady."⁶⁵

It is with Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, though, that Twain's hostility to such writing becomes prominent. The vernacular narration and down-to-earth realism of Huck Finn drama-

tize the idea, for Huck's voice immediately highlights any pretension and falseness in any other character. Twain's antipathy can be seen first in the contrast between Huck and Tom Sawyer. The latter, in the opening chapters of the novel, outlines his elaborate, book-derived plans for his gang. The force of his eloquence and evident expertise is enough at first to persuade the other boys to quite literally "play along" with him. But after a month, says Huck, "I resigned. All the boys did. We hadn't robbed nobody, we hadn't killed any people, but only just pretended. ... I couldn't see no profit in it."⁶⁶

The difference in point of view between the two boys is made plain here, though at this stage Tom's attitude is still harmless. Only at the end of the novel, in the "Evasion" episode, are the dangers of Tom's romantic outlook fully demonstrated. The unnecessary suffering undergone by all the participants in the boy's elaborate charade makes the point. The sources of Tom's ideas for escapes in this episode are the implied objects of Twain's attack on this whole way of thinking: "Baron Trenck ... Casanova ... Benvenuto Chelleeny ... Henri IV."⁶⁷

But even before the last part of the novel, Twain provides himself with a deliberate opportunity to attack another author, Sir Walter Scott. As Richard P. Adams observes,

One of the antipathies which Clemens cherished most warmly and flourished most often was his detestation of Sir Walter Scott and all or almost all of his works. In Life on the Mississippi Scott is blamed for having checked the "wave of progress" in the South with his propaganda for medieval feudalism, which, according to Clemens, "sets the world in love with dreams and phantoms; with decayed and swinish forms of religion; with decayed and degraded systems of government; with the sillinesses and emptinesses, sham grandeur, sham gauds, and sham chivalries of a brainless and worthless long vanished society."⁶⁸

A commonly cited connection between the falseness of Scott's world, in Twain's view, and Tom Sawyer's world is the suggestively-named steamboat Sir Walter Scott which Huck and Jim explore after Huck has made the remark: "Do you reckon Tom Sawyer would ever go by this thing? Not for pie, he wouldn't. He'd call it an adventure--that's what he'd call it; and he'd land on that wreck if it was his last act."⁶⁹ This episode almost costs Huck and Jim their lives when their boat disappears. Huck's bringing himself and Jim into unnecessary danger--emulating Tom Sawyer--can be seen as another example of the romantic imagination's causing needless suffering.

Tom Sawyer as a creature of the bankrupt romantic imagination is presented most clearly in the "Evasion" episode of Huckleberry Finn. The unattractiveness of his portrayal in these chapters and the unnecessary suffering that his actions here cause have led Thomas Arthur Gullason to remark that Tom is "the real antagonist of the novel." In this view, Tom's

whole "life has been a continuous lie, and it is this final harmful lie in a serious adult situation ... that epitomizes his romantic nonsense."⁷⁰ Certainly, the foolish insensitivity of the boy's actions in this part of the book would seem to justify this kind of comment.

Yet, within the context of all the Huck and Tom stories, what gives the attack on romanticism its importance is its complex intertwining with the other, major themes in the works: the process of maturation, the conflict with Providence, even the freedom of the Transcendent Figure. The intertwining becomes even more evident in the next story, "Huck and Tom Among the Indians," where Twain follows much the same pattern as in the "Evasion" episode. Only in the "Indians" fragment does he force Tom to take responsibility for his own actions.

The need for moral responsibility is related to the attack on romanticism from the very beginning of this work. It is Fenimore Cooper's novels about Indians that lead Tom off on the bloody adventures on the prairies, dragging Huck and Jim along with him. Twain attacks Cooper for falsely portraying the Indians. He demonstrates the dangers of such inaccuracy by placing Tom, who believes the writer unquestioningly, and the other two in avoidable danger. But Tom's explicit acknowledgement of the falsity of this view, after the Indians massacre the Mills family, is a major difference between this work and the preceding one. In Huckleberry Finn, the boy never

admits that his "best authorities"⁷¹ have not the slightest relevance to the task of helping Jim gain his freedom, and that they actually hinder a safe and easy escape.

In the "Indians" story, then, the attack on romanticism is effectively fused with other significant themes. However, this work is the last one in the Huck and Tom series in which it plays an important role. In the stories from the 1890's there is much less evidence of Twain's hostility to romanticism. Lessening of the author's antipathy may have come about because the major intervening work, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (1889) was, as S. B. Liljegren remarks, Twain's "most elaborate and sustained attack on Romanticism. ... The aim of the book is to show that the Middle Ages, which Scott had described as instinct with high ideals, chivalry, refinement, and truth, actually constituted a period of ignorance, crime, low culture, deficient hygiene, superstition, and boorishness."⁷²

Thus A Connecticut Yankee may have relieved Twain's need to attack facile romanticism, at least in the subsequent Huck and Tom stories. Perhaps that is why Twain's antipathy is evident (and only to a limited extent) in just one of these stories, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy." At the beginning of this story, Tom Sawyer--in characteristic fashion--spends time describing elaborate rituals for "two Councils of State to run [the] conspiracy ... a Council of Ten and a Council of Three;

black gowns for the Ten and red for the Three, and masks for all."⁷³ But the literary sources for Tom's ideas are not emphasized in the story, and discussions of rituals and costumes gradually diminishes, particularly in the second half. The most important function of the romantic trappings seems to be merely to reiterate the point that the sole responsibility for the events of the conspiracy lies with Tom. He constitutes himself alone as the "Council of Three," and as Huck comments, "The Council of Three was supreme and could abrogate anything the other Council done." All decision-making powers, therefore, are carefully placed in Tom's hands, with--as we have seen--disastrous results.

Indeed, the most important feature of these less-prominent themes in the Huck and Tom stories is the care with which Twain interwove them effectively with other elements in the works (and, it should be emphasized once more, this took place over decades). As the boys grow older and their perceptions and understanding of human behaviour deepen and darken, so does their view of the paradigmatic village, St. Petersburg. If there is an overriding Providence which controls events, as Twain implies, one of its priorities would seem to be the teaching of moral lessons to characters, such as Tom Sawyer, who need them. The attack on romanticism is used both in Huckleberry Finn and "Indians" as an element of the maturation theme, related also to the workings of fate. Even the idea of

the Transcendent Figure is connected to all of these, for Tom Sawyer, the focus of all these later narratives, seems at times to believe himself to be a kind of Transcendent Figure. He considers himself an individual not bound by the workings of fate and not needing any kind of lesson in moral responsibility. The effect of these later works, of course, is to prove otherwise to him.

The persistence with which Twain reiterates these themes, then, and the generally effective use to which he puts them, provide additional illustration of the importance of these works to the author. As with the theme of maturation, these motifs show that Twain returned again and again to the world of Huck and Tom because it enabled him to embody concepts that were significant to him and that called for development.

NOTES

¹ The "Matter of Hannibal" is defined in Smith, "Images," pp. 3-4. The Transcendent Figure is defined in Smith, Mark Twain, pp. 136-137.

² Smith, "Images," p. 8.

³ Smith, "Images," p. 11.

⁴ Smith, "Images," pp. 12-13.

⁵ Smith, "Images," pp. 3-5.

⁶ "Villagers of 1840-43" has been published in Blair, Mark Twain's Hannibal, pp. 28-40. In it are such descriptions as: "Pavey ... A lazy, vile-tempered old hellion"; "The Hanged Nigger. He raped and murdered a girl of 13 in the woods"; "The Stabbed Cal[ifornia] Emigrant"; and a son of the Ratcliffe family, who "had to be locked into a small house in corner of the yard--and chained."

⁷ Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 46.

⁸ Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad, p. 256.

⁹ Quoted in Gerber, p. 346.

¹⁰ Clemens, p. 209.

¹¹ Stone, p. 190.

¹² Twain, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," p. 402.

¹³ Twain, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," p. 404.

¹⁴ See pp. 96-97.

15 Smith, "Images," p. 8.

16 Twain, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," p. 199.

17 It should be remembered that the original impetus for the story--"Pater-rollers and slavery"--stemmed from real events in Hannibal in the early 1840's. See Blair, Introduction, pp. 152-153.

18 Quoted in Macnaughton, p. 25.

19 Blair, Introduction, p. 17.

20 Smith, "Images," pp. 15, 18-19.

21 See Note 6 above. Further examples include the tragic marriage of Mary Moss and lawyer Lakenan, the mysterious murder of Jesse Armstrong's husband for which she and her lover were tried and acquitted, and the Blankenship girls, "charged with prostitution--not proven."

22 Smith, Mark Twain, p. 136.

23 Clemens, p. 117.

24 Twain, "Indians," p. 120.

25 Twain, "Indians," p. 111.

26 Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad, p. 281.

27 Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad, p. 287.

28 Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad, p. 341.

29 Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad, p. 264.

30 Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad, p. 263.

31 Twain, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," p. 412.

32 Twain, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," p. 414.

33 Twain, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," p. 415.

34 See pp. 77-78.

35 It should be noted also that after the death of his daughter Susie in 1896, Twain wrote numerous stories and fragments that are explicitly fantasies, such as "The Great Dark" and "The Enchanted Sea-Wilderness," involving improbably events and supernatural characters. The Mysterious Stranger narratives should be regarded as additional examples of this vein of Twain's later writings.

36 Gibson, pp. 4-9.

37 Twain, "Schoolhouse Hill," p. 217.

38 Quoted in Gibson, p. 429.

39 "The Chronicle of Young Satan" (written between 1897 and 1900) was carried to 423 manuscript pages; "No. 44, The Mysterious Stranger" (1902-1908) is 530 manuscript pages. Both are far lengthier fragments than the two St. Petersburg versions. See Gibson, pp. 5-11.

40 John S. Tuckey, Introduction to Mark Twain's Fables of Man (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), p. 3.

41 A little-noted fact is that St. Petersburg has a resident witch, Mother Hopkins. Before the opening of the novel she has bewitched Huck's Pap. See Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 76.

42 Blair, "Structure," p. 88.

43 Clemens, p. 9.

44 Clemens, p. 41.

⁴⁵ Daniel G. Hoffman, "Black Magic--and White--in Huckleberry Finn," in his Form and Fable in American Fiction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 320.

⁴⁶ Clemens, p. 225.

⁴⁷ Twain, "Indians," p. 120.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Blair, Introduction, p. 90.

⁴⁹ Twain, "Indians," p. 120.

⁵⁰ Quoted in Blair, Introduction, pp. 90-91.

⁵¹ Stone, p. 183.

⁵² Stone, p. 188.

⁵³ Stone, p. 190.

⁵⁴ See pp. 120-121.

⁵⁵ Twain, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," p. 164.

⁵⁶ Twain, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," p. 191.

⁵⁷ Twain, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," p. 202.

⁵⁸ Twain, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," p. 204.

⁵⁹ See pp. 144-145.

⁶⁰ Tuckey, p. 4.

⁶¹ Tuckey, ed., Mark Twain's Fables, pp. 118-120.

⁶² Tuckey, ed., Mark Twain's Fables, pp. 126-128.

⁶³ See pp. 39-40.

- 64 Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 160.
- 65 Twain, Tom Sawyer, p. 163n.
- 66 Clemens, p. 15.
- 67 Clemens, p. 186.
- 68 Richard P. Adams, "The Unity and Coherence of Huckleberry Finn," Tulane Studies in English, 6 (1956), 94.
- 69 Clemens, p. 57.
- 70 Gullason, pp. 89-90.
- 71 Clemens, p. 187.
- 72 S. B. Liljegren, The Revolt against Romanticism in American Literature as Evidenced in the Works of S. L. Clemens (Upsala: The American Institute in the University of Upsala's Essays and Studies on American Language and Literature, I, 1945), 49-50.
- 73 Twain, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," p. 173.

CONCLUSION

The characters Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn represented an extraordinarily complex and significant part of Mark Twain's creative life. They were the focus of deep and sometimes ambivalent feelings, memories, hopes and dreams for the writer. They had so strong a hold on him that over thirty years and through dramatic changes in his life and circumstances Tom and Huck provided a continuing source of creative inspiration.

The sheer mass of material involving Twain's writings about the boys testifies to the remarkable and prolonged interest he maintained in them: there are four published works, at least five lengthy fragments, a play, two brief fragments, outlines, synopses, and countless pages of notes, written over a period from the early 1870's to after the turn of the century. His interest in the boys continued from the time of his marriage and the beginnings of his fame through the birth of his children, the years of prosperity in Hartford, his subsequent financial disaster and bankruptcy, the death of Susy, prolonged residence abroad, and finally to the return of his financial stability and his worldwide fame in the early 1900's.

In addition to the amount of material written about the boys (and the time and energy this represents), another indi-

cation of their abiding importance to him is the depth and complexity of the ideas and themes discussed in these works.

Several of the ideas are unique to the Tom and Huck stories.

Among the prominent issues explored in these narratives are maturity, moral responsibility, the profound evil of slavery, sexuality, and life in small towns.

In many of the stories, several of these themes are carefully interrelated. Tom and Huck achieve maturity, for example, by learning their moral responsibility towards the slave Jim. Human sexuality and desire underlie many characters' actions, as the boys come to understand this part of growing up. Sexuality can be seen most prominently in the "Indians" fragment, but as a motivation for some human behaviour it is visible also in Tom Sawyer, "Tom Sawyer, Detective," and evidently in the lost "Fifty Years After" manuscript. Small town life is related to the maturity theme in that a less attractive view of the town can be traced to the deepening of a child's understanding as he grows older. In Twain's canon such a complex interweaving of these themes is unique to the later Huck and Tom narratives.

The stories concerning Tom and Huck began with the "Boy's Manuscript," written perhaps quite soon after the writer's marriage and rediscovery of his own past (as evidenced by the February, 1870 letter to Will Bowen). But that work seems to have been primarily satirical in its impulse. Only with the writing of the 1874 outline for Tom Sawyer did Twain begin to

discover the vast possibilities that a realistic portrayal of childhood presented. His original intention was to chart the course of a boy's growing up, from early childhood through middle age. Evidently because of comments from Howells, uncertainty arose in Twain's mind over how far along to bring the boy, and he ended Tom Sawyer with his hero still a child. But Twain's first intention remained. His original conception of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was to take a boy of twelve and "run him on through life,"¹ as he told Howells. In the course of Huck's travels, though he chronologically remains a child, he endures enough experiences to mature him dramatically. By the end of the novel, he has learned the importance of responsibility, the need for empathy, and the humanity of the Negro. Tom Sawyer, in contrast, has not yet learned any of these lessons. The difference in outlook between the two boys becomes dramatically evident (to many later critics' irritation) in the last ten chapters of Huckleberry Finn.

Twain may have been aware of this perhaps unexpected disparity between his two characters. He may quite deliberately have attempted, in the later stories, to remedy the disparity by forcing Tom to undergo experiences that would enable him to develop the same level of maturity displayed by Huck. This process was complicated, of course, by the great difference in the boys' characters, particularly by Tom's flamboyance and desire to control events as opposed to Huck's passivity and

desire for anonymity. The experiences that Tom would have to endure, therefore, would have to be quite different in form and scope from those undergone by Huck on his drifting voyage down the Mississippi.

In particular, Twain seems to have realized that the most appropriate maturing experience for Tom was one caused by his own actions, not one caused merely by circumstance. The boy would have to embark deliberately on a course of action of his own devising, against well-meant advice, then watch disaster develop, and finally acknowledge his own responsibility for what has occurred. Adding profound significance to this process, as Twain came to discover, was the figure of the black slave, Jim.

The black man was the focus of a major part of Huck's maturity. In the later stories he would become a crucial part of the process of Tom's growing up. The writer began this process almost immediately after finishing Huckleberry Finn, in the unfinished fragment, "Huck and Tom Among the Indians." There Tom brings Jim into pointless and unnecessary danger--in effect, as part of a game--but he explicitly acknowledges his responsibility for this action. Such an admission had not occurred in either Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn.

The "Indians" story was abandoned shortly afterwards, but Twain's persistent interest in the characters and in the ideas they embodied--even after this setback--is demonstrated by his

return to the boys and Jim in three works from the early 1890's. These are the two published works Tom Sawyer Abroad and "Tom Sawyer, Detective," and the lost manuscript, "Tom Sawyer's Mystery." Though the two surviving works are somewhat superficial and trivial, even they contain indications of Twain's abiding concerns with such topics as individual responsibility, the workings of fate, and the quality of small-town life.

It is with the next story in the sequence, "Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy," that these various ideas are brought into a comprehensive artistic whole. Twain's skill in writing the narrative is evident despite the fact that the story was written over a period of several years following the author's bankruptcy, the death of Susy, and other traumas of his later life. In the work Tom elaborates a complex scheme to enliven life in the small town and terrorize the villagers, a plan similar to his "Evasion" scheme in Huckleberry Finn. Once this is under way Twain carefully allows the plan to disintegrate. With Jim as the primary catalyst, he forces the boy to learn the nature of responsibility in a context of public humiliation. What is more, Tom accepts the responsibility for his actions and the suffering he has caused. The boy's recognition of his responsibility fulfills a major criterion of maturity that Walter Blair saw emerging as early as Tom Sawyer.²

Finally, the lost manuscript of 1902 seems to have contained the culmination of the 1874 outline, the return of the

boys to St. Petersburg as adults. Evidently, the story explored the changes in perspective that the passage of time brings about--as, indeed, had occurred in Twain himself in the decades since he left Hannibal.

Earlier scholars and critics, beginning with DeVoto, tended either to denigrate or to ignore these works, failing to see in them any kind of thematic coherence or pattern. These early oversights led, in later critics, to an inaccurate focus on Adventures of Huckleberry Finn as embodying all that Twain had to say about the boys. In particular, that novel left the impression of Tom Sawyer as something of a villain in the writer's eyes. Yet the later stories establish without question that Twain remained profoundly interested in Tom, disabused him of some of his more unattractive traits, and chose him to represent practical maturity. Recent Twain criticism, in concentrating more objectively on his later writings, places the writer's attitude towards the boys in a more accurate perspective.

The importance of Tom and Huck in Twain's thought throughout his writing career, then, is becoming increasingly evident. With this new understanding, something of the complexity of attitude towards childhood and growing up is becoming clearer. These stories demonstrate that rather than being "imprisoned in boyhood," Twain saw childhood not simply as a place of escape from the problems of adulthood, but as a preparation of vital importance for the events of later life. Twain saw

childhood experiences as events in which a child learned lessons about behaviour that would be significant for him as an adult. A child could be irresponsible; a child could ignore the feelings of others; a child could be unconscious of the interdependence of human beings. An adult must behave otherwise. In these stories the experiences the boys undergo teach them this lesson.

Tom Sawyer was the more appropriate character on which to focus this lesson, for he is involved in the community, as well as being dynamic and creative. In contrast, solitary and passive Huck Finn would always remain on the fringes of society. Any lesson he learned would remain unique to his own experience. Tom Sawyer, on the other hand, could serve as an example for the rest of society. In the "Conspiracy" story, had Twain been able to allow Tom a public confession of what he had learned, such an act would illustrate this point most dramatically. As it is, the fact that Huck and the reader know what he has learned must be considered sufficient. The loss of the "Fifty Years After" manuscript makes Tom's trial scene Twain's last surviving comment on the subject.

NOTES

¹ Smith and Gibson, I, 92.

² Blair, "Structure," p. 84.

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