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MYTHOLOGICAL ASPECTS IN MARK TWAIN'S NOVEL THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

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Abstract

Mythology is the study and interpretation of myths, which are typically sacred tales or fables of a society that deal with many elements of human nature, including good and evil. Myths are based on traditional tales. But myths are more than just stories, and they have deeper meaning in both ancient and contemporary civilizations.

Myths are revered narratives that describe the universe and human existence. This essay examines culture and how it affects Mark Twain's books. Twain discusses the friendship between Huck and Jim, as well as how Huckleberry Finn depicts slavery, culture, and Christianity. This highlights the mythological elements in Huck's existence. Huck Finn has been compared to both the picaresque hero and the American Adam myth.

This essay argues that the picaresque and quixotic mythologies were cleverly and ironically combined to create the myth of the American Adam as it is presented in Huckleberry Finn. This essay discusses the institutional religion (namely, Christianity) that Huckleberry Finn represents. Christianity is practiced by the educated and civilized, whereas the uneducated and underprivileged, like Huck and Jim, are victims of this particular aspect.

"Myths are public dreams, dreams are private myths."
-Joseph Campbell

Twain traverses the Mississippi while reliving some of his own youthful escapades through his young hero, Huck. Like Huck, young Twain preferred swimming holes to contrived Sunday morning sermons, preferring instead to explore the natural vistas of the Mississippi River, travel the vast waters on improvised rafts, and cool down. Through Huck, Twain also reenacts his own experiences going to Christian rendezvous on Sunday mornings—Sabbath meetings where Christians converse about their beliefs. Twain understood that these transactions hardly ever affected the theological dealers' daily life. Twain often contrasts Huck's moral growth outside of church and his Christian society to the moral scarcity of the Mississippi Christians who attend church to criticize these common dealers of theology who say much but accomplish little.

Twain's book thus criticizes the pervasive hypocritical culture that Americans called Christianity.

This highlights the fact that Twain was not a religious crusader; rather, he was only admonishing religious people to live their lives in accordance with the fundamental moral principles they profess rather than ignorantly dehumanising others in the name of Christ.



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