

MARK TWAIN'S POETICS

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Annotatsiya: *Ushbu maqolada Mark Tvenning qisqa hikoyalari ijtimoiy hayot tasviri nuqtayi nazaridan tahlil qilinadi. Adib turli ijtimoiy muammolarni, jumladan, adolatsizlik, aldov, ikkiyuzlamachilik va ijtimoiy tengsizlikni tanqidiy yondashuv asosida tasvirlaydi. Satira va yumordan foydalangan holda, Tven ushbu muammolarni yoritib, realistik va hayotiy qahramonlarni yaratadi. Ushbu maqola Mark Tvenning qisqa hikoyalarida ijtimoiy hayotning o'ziga xos tasvirini o'rganishga qaratilgan.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Mark Tven, qisqa hikoyalar, ijtimoiy tanqid, satira, yumor, ikkiyuzlamachilik, adolatsizlik, ijtimoiy tengsizlik, realizm, Amerika adabiyoti.*

Аннотация: *В данной статье анализируются короткие рассказы Марка Твена с точки зрения их изображения общественной жизни. Писатель ярко описывает различные социальные проблемы, включая несправедливость, обман, лицемерие и социальное неравенство, используя критический подход. Применяя сатиру и юмор, Твен подчеркивает эти проблемы, создавая реалистичных и узнаваемых персонажей. Данная статья направлена на изучение уникальных аспектов представления общественной жизни в коротких рассказах Марка Твена.*

Ключевые слова: *Марк Твен, короткие рассказы, социальная критика, сатира, юмор, лицемерие, несправедливость, социальное неравенство, реализм, американская литература.*

Annotation: *This article analyzes Mark Twain's short stories from the perspective of their depiction of social life. The writer vividly portrays various societal issues, including injustice, deceit, hypocrisy, and social inequality, with a critical approach. By employing satire and humor, Twain highlights these problems while creating realistic and relatable characters. This article aims to explore the unique aspects of how social life is represented in Mark Twain's short stories.*

Keywords: *Mark Twain, short stories, social criticism, satire, humor, hypocrisy, injustice, social inequality, realism, American literature.*

INTRODUCTION

Mark Twain, one of the most prominent figures in American literature, depicted social life in a realistic and satirical manner. His short stories provide a detailed look at the social transformations, injustices, and moral dilemmas prevalent in 19th-century American

society. Through his storytelling, Twain exposes falsehoods and hypocrisy while illustrating the lives of ordinary people. This article delves into the themes and techniques Twain uses in his short stories to portray social realities.

MAIN BODY

1. Mark Twain's Literary Style and His Approach to Social Life

Mark Twain's works reflect a distinctive blend of realism and satire. His short stories are marked by engaging plots, lively characters, and insightful observations of societal norms. Twain's keen ability to depict reality while simultaneously exposing society's flaws has made his stories enduringly relevant.

2. Representation of Social Issues in Short Stories

Many of Twain's short stories, such as "The Million Pound Bank Note," "The Secret of Success," and "The Good Little Boy and the Bad Little Boy," shed light on social inequality, the disparity between wealth and poverty, and the hypocrisy of societal values. These stories critique the rigid class structures of the time and emphasize the difficulties faced by the underprivileged.

3. The Role of Satire and Humor in Social Criticism

Twain masterfully employs satire and humor to critique the absurdities and contradictions of society. In "The Million Pound Bank Note," for example, he humorously illustrates how wealth and social status can dramatically alter a person's life. Through irony and wit, Twain makes profound social commentaries that resonate with readers even today.

4. Character Portrayals and Their Connection to Social Problems

The protagonists in Twain's short stories are often ordinary individuals who face societal challenges. In "The Good Little Boy and the Bad Little Boy," for instance, he satirizes moral expectations by portraying a boy who follows the rules yet suffers misfortune, while another boy disregards moral codes and thrives. This paradox exposes the contradictions in societal values and norms.

In Mark Twain's story "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County", the idea that a person's simplicity can sometimes put them in difficulty is expressed. The protagonist, Jim Smiley, is a man who loves gambling. He firmly believes that his frog, named Daniel Webster, can jump farther than any other and bets \$40 with a stranger. However, the stranger takes advantage of Smiley's naivety by secretly filling the frog's mouth with lead pellets. Unaware of this trick, Smiley loses the bet. When he finally realizes the truth, the stranger has already disappeared. Through this story, the author aims to show the dangers of excessive gullibility and the fact that not everyone can be trusted.

Twain's "How I Edited an Agricultural Paper", a satirical piece, criticizes the issues within journalism and the press. The story narrates how the protagonist becomes the editor of an agricultural newspaper despite having no knowledge of journalism. Surprisingly, the newspaper's popularity increases, but not because of the quality of the

articles—rather, due to their absurdity. Statements such as “Turnips can be shaken off trees without damage” and “An ostrich sleeps peacefully when music is played” attract a wide readership. The situation becomes so ridiculous that one reader, convinced he has gone mad because of the newspaper, even burns down his own house. In the end, it is revealed that many of the newspaper’s writers have no expertise in the fields they cover: vendors write about war, and pharmacists criticize new films and books. Through biting satire, Twain exposes the ignorance of both readers and those in charge of the media, emphasizing how people often consume nonsense rather than genuine information.

Another thought-provoking story by Twain, “My Watch”, explores the concept of knowing when to let go. The protagonist’s watch initially works well but eventually stops. Each time he takes it to a repairman, the watch receives a different diagnosis. Despite numerous attempts to fix it, the watch never functions properly again. Ironically, the cost of repairs far exceeds the original price of the watch. Through this, Twain suggests that there are times in life when one must simply accept and move on rather than holding onto something that no longer serves its purpose.

In “A strange theft”, a man attempts to steal butter from a shop by hiding it under his hat. The shopkeeper, instead of directly confronting the thief, invites him to sit by a warm stove and offers him hot tea. As time passes, the heat melts the butter, causing it to drip from the thief’s hat down to his feet. When the thief, embarrassed and unable to endure the situation, rushes out of the store, the shopkeeper remarks, "I highly value nine pence, but I cannot accuse you for the pound of butter in your hat!"

The story “Running for Governor” portrays people who fabricate accusations for personal gain. Despite his clean reputation, Mark Twain is slandered in newspapers and receives anonymous blackmail letters when he runs for governor. However, he refuses to respond to any of these attacks. Eventually, when he withdraws his candidacy, the public assumes that the accusations against him were true. Through this piece, Twain critiques a society where false accusations and political manipulation are common tactics to ruin one’s opponents.

Twain’s “A Cure for the Blues”, also known as “The Great Revolution in Pitcairn”, discusses the behavior of flatterers. The story takes place on a train, where railway employees initially claim that no seats are available. However, when they mistakenly believe Twain to be New York’s mayor, McClellan, a previously “fully booked” train suddenly has a luxurious family compartment available. This simple but powerful story remains relevant today, as it exposes the nature of opportunism and the treatment of people based on perceived social status.

CONCLUSION

Mark Twain’s short stories serve as a powerful lens through which social issues are examined. His use of satire and humor not only entertains but also encourages readers to reflect on the injustices and hypocrisies of society. By shedding light on social inequalities,

class struggles, and human folly, Twain creates narratives that transcend time and remain relevant in contemporary discussions on morality and justice.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Twain's writing is his ability to blend humor with serious social critique. His stories do not merely expose social problems but also challenge readers to reassess their own values and beliefs. By using irony and exaggeration, Twain compels his audience to see the absurdities in societal norms, encouraging a deeper understanding of human behavior and social injustice.

Moreover, Twain's portrayal of flawed yet relatable characters adds depth to his critique. Through their struggles and triumphs, he presents a nuanced exploration of human nature, showcasing the complexities of morality, ethics, and personal integrity. His ability to humanize both the oppressed and the oppressors allows for a more balanced and insightful social commentary.

Twain's lasting influence on literature and social critique is evident in how his works continue to be studied and appreciated today. His short stories provide not only historical insight into 19th-century America but also timeless lessons on fairness, hypocrisy, and the human condition. His legacy endures as a testament to the power of literature to question, challenge, and inspire change in society.

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