

## Chapter I

### Mark Twain and American Nationalist Identity

Mark Twain's real name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens. He was born in Florida, Missouri in the central region of the United States of America on November 30, 1835. He was only four years old when the family moved to Hannibal with the hope of improvement of their material condition. After the death of his father in 1847, Twain was forced to leave the school and do something. He was then only twelve years old, and for the next ten years, he was an apprentice printer, both in Hannibal and New York City. He also was a riverboat pilot for four years, and during that time, he became familiar with all the towns along the Mississippi river. When the Civil War began, Twain's brother convinced him to go to west on an expedition, a trip which became the subject of a later non-fictional work, *Roughing It* (1872). After Twain turned fifty, however, his fortunes reversed themselves; his health began to fail and he faced bankruptcy; in addition, his wife became a semi-invalid, one daughter developed epilepsy, and his oldest daughter died of meningitis. Yet, Twain survived and became a critic and essayist.

As one of the America's first and foremost realists and humorists, Mark Twain, usually writes about the things he got from firsthand experience. Two of his best-known novels typify this trait: *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885). Twain achieved fame as a humorist lecturer and writer. His works *The Innocent Abroad* (1869), *Roughing It* (1872) and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) made him immensely popular among the Americans.

Though Twain's writing seems to hinge on much humour, this is only on the surface. If we look at his works in depth, the comic surface turns out to mask unexpected depths. Williams Dean Howells comments that, "Mark Twain is not merely a great humorist; he is remarkable fellow in a very different way" (12). Similarly, Archibald Heanderson says, "If one would lay his finger the secret of Twain's world-wide popularity as a humorist, he must find that secret primarily in the universality and the humanity of his humor [. . .] Mark Twain [. . .] America's greatest cosmopolitan" (23). No doubt he was a professional humorist of the frontier. In addition, he is a great moralist of his time.

Twain's fiction cannot be divorced from the rubrics of "The American Novel" which has to be viewed as a tensional movement between massed polarities: individual and society on the personal, hopes and frustration on the psychological, democracy and monarchy on the political, freedom and authority on the conceptual, Europe and America on the historical, the settlers and frontier on the existential. All these polarities are held in the novel by conflict.

The basic urge which inspires Twain is the search for identity; the American novelist seems to be always on the move. As molded by American consciousness, Twain searches history and identity of their own in *The Prince and the Pauper*. The history and identity of America was surpassed by the European colonization. It is not only Twain's attempt to search the lost history but it is aroused because of the nationalistic feelings. Two major literary currents in the nineteenth century America merged in Mark Twain's popular frontier humor and local color, or "regionalist". These related literary

approaches began in the 1830s and had even earlier roots in the oral tradition. The unstable relationship between reality and illusion is Twain's characteristic theme, the basic factor of much of his humor. The magnificent yet deceptive, constantly changing form is also the main features of his imaginative landscape.

Twain's major works reflect his own personal experience in various parts of the United States and of his travels abroad. In his novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), he sets the story of a son whose father is alcoholic; Huck is adopted by respectable family when his father, in a drunken stupor, threatens to kill him. He joins in his escape another outcast, the slave Jim, whose owner, Miss Watson thinks of selling him. Jim and Huck travel many strange and far-off places and enjoy shore adventures that show the verity, generosity and sometimes cruel irrationality of society. And this particular novel leads Mark Twain to height and popularity. In *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), he uses rich Native American humor and shrewd observation of human character, which makes it one of the popular books. Here, Twain understands the psychology of the small boys. Similarly, In *The Life on the Mississippi* (1883), he writes about the subject matter of a river which he traveled. The remarkable thing about this novel is the vivid portrayal of the river, on-shore life, anecdotes and description which are of gripping interest. In the same manner in his work, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), he uses the tale of Yankee awaking in the England of King Arthur's time. The time of King Arthur was full of superstition and privileged of the church. When the modern Yankee starts the campaign against all this, the interest of the book is heightened.

In *Those Extraordinary Twins* (1892) Twain tells how, seeing a poster advertising a set of two-headed Italian twins, he started to write a "fantastic little story" about them. But the tale kept spreading, other people got into it, and finally he discovered that he had two stories on his hands, one a farce, the other a tragedy. He writes:

So I pulled out the farce and left the tragedy,' he explained.

‘Also I took those twins apart and made two separate men of them. They had no occasion to have foreign names now, but it was too much trouble to remove them all through, so I left them christened as they were and made no explanation. (Smith 426)

Twain dramatizes the mystery of identity. Even when he makes a burlesque of the whole affair in *Those Extraordinary Twins* his mind is at work upon this mystery.

Twain keeps returning to the theme of identity in various ways. In *The Mysterious Stranger* (1916) and *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg* (1900) the identity of the chief person is a mystery and the effect he works upon people raises a still deeper question of identity.

Twain's use of disguise in his works creates a lot of humour. His humor is a philosophy and an act of faith for him. The droll comedian in him as well as the romancer serves the indignant moralist who cannot abide any sign of cruelty, ingratitude, sham or disloyalty. Humour works as a balancer between his idealism and realism.

Mark Twain employed a tremendous amount of comedy in his works. He was not a funny man, building laughs with a series of disconnected wisecracks. He saw that humor was in life, and with his superb plain American

frontier voice he drew it out, as one may draw sap from the maple. But then of course he had to boil it down to get the flavour. The flavour is unmistakably American -not only in the ring of voices and the recognizable scenes but in that search for his identity which, three hundred and fifty years since Americans began to separate themselves from the culture of Europe, is still going on.

Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882), as a historical satire tries to examine and evaluate the past, which is, sixteenth century in terms of the standards of modern sense of morality. The plot is set in Henry VIII's reign and later the past is peculiarly mixed up with the present, strangely the modern London. Twain in this novel tries to explore the American identity in European disguise. Two characters are mostly important in this novel Tom Canty and Edward Tudor, the family of beggars and the son of King Henry VIII respectively. Tom has always a desire to live a rich and clean life, i.e. royal life. On the other hand, Edward Tudor is fed up with the confined life in the royal palace. He believes the commoners have more 'freedom' than him. Circumstance helps Tom and Edward to meet each other and each becomes fascinated by other's lifestyle and even more fascinated by the fact that they each bear an amazing and uncanny resemblance to each other. Because of the changing clothes Tom turns out to be "prince" and Edward turns out to be "pauper" and Tom lives in the palace and Edward obliges to live in the slums. Here, Twain satirizes the nature of appearance when clothes determine the role of Tom and Edward. In the outside Edward experiences the bitter reality of common people and Tom shares same kind of experience in the palace. Edward's adventures among the common people helps him to understand the

unjust laws made by the government. Here, Twain tries to expose the unjust laws made by the European colonization in America. By showing these two characters, he tries to explore the true nature of American people and its history and true identity. One of the next characters Miles Hendon greatly helped Edward to discover his real status in the royal palace. On the other hand, Tom faces different difficulties in the royal palace and the Great Seal of England helped both of them to remain in their position. Then king Henry VIII dies and the true prince Edward becomes the king. Tom easily leaves his feigned position of prince. This is the real historical event that Mark Twain has used in the novel, the death of King Henry VIII. At last Miles Hendon is rewarded with raised noble rank of Earl and the unique family right to sit in the presence of the king. As for Tom, in gratitude for supporting the new king's claim to the throne, Edward assigns him as "the king's ward", a privileged position he holds for the rest of his life. In the end, they all live happily for quite some time.

To sum up, disguise is often a way of exposing the "real" identity. In *The Prince and the Pauper* Prince Edward, taken of his fine royal clothes, is no better than the boy whose rags he wears. He merely makes himself ridiculous when he tries to be the king he really is, while Tom Canty quickly takes on kingly qualities and is soon able to rule as well as Edward. King Arthur, without his royal stuffs, cannot be recognized as a king. So he wanders through his own kingdom, deceived of his identity as surely as of his royal clothes. So, this brings us to the central problem of identity. A king is not a king unless he possesses the innate traits that prove him. The common man with his sufferings, his ability to work and endure, is not only equal to kings but superior to them.

### **Critics on *The Prince and the Pauper***

A large number of critics have interpreted *The Prince and the Pauper* from multiple perspectives. They have analyzed it from the perspective of myth, satire and humorous way. They are heavily concerned on the sixteenth century royal palace of England and mocked at its system. This research tries to explore the issue of identity of Americans which was bugged by the European colonization at that time.

Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* is an engrossing story of a mistaken identity in the sixteenth century England. This study examines the obverse role of Prince Edward and Pauper. Tom hints at Mark Twain's endeavours to separate the true and false identity of Americans. Further, some critics illustrate that the "prince" and the "pauper" is relevant to the present day problems. He claims that youngsters today are "rebellious against the decadence they perceive in the establishment. Twain exposes the knavery and decadence of the English aristocracy" (16). His claim shows that the sixteenth century royal England's position was deteriorating. The laws made by the government were being dismantled by the common people.

Commenting on the novel, Robert W. Smith says, "*The Prince and the Pauper* is in effect a double biography of George Ellery Hale and George W. Ritchey as the book's focus is the changing relationship between the two men" (45). Hale is shown in the "prince" of the book's title and in contrast, Ritchey, the "Pauper" was a wonderfully creative and highly skilled optician of telescope. Similarly, another critic Louis Suárez-Potts views the novel as children's story. Donald E. Osterbrock comments:

*The Prince and the Pauper* has, at its center, an unhomey romance of the road between a young boy and an older, more experienced man, the dispossessed knight, Miles Hendon, who teaches the young Edward about the road while the two seek to regain what is theirs. Both works, the criminological and the literary, present the unknown field of tramping within the circumference of the law; and both present that same field as a paradoxical place of escape. (9)

Although the novel is not a masterpiece of Mark Twain, the novel's lasting value stems from its, as J.R. LeMaster says, "compassionate and imaginative play with the vagrities of identity, its hunger for fathering, a satirical yet ambivalent attraction to ritual and power, and keen sense of injustice" (592).

Similarly, Tom H. Towers has argues in his article: "*The Prince and the Pauper* is major and forth night expression of a cultural and political conservatism which is a minor note in Twain's writing" (34). It reflects the growing hostility towards England and in particular towards England

*The Prince and the Pauper* is set in the distant European past whereas *Huck Finn* records an era of American history. Leonard Woolf reacts against when he condemns the work as betraying "a commonness and tawdriness, alack of sensitiveness, which don't matter to the impetuous appetite of youth, but which can not be ignored by the more discriminating and exacting taste of middle-age" (qtd in Stahl 204). This claim resides in the realm where the themes of Mark Twain's psychological obsession and his quest for a cultural identity meet.



*The Prince and the Pauper* clearly contains a strand of mythic story in, as John Daniel Stahl views:

both in Durkheim's sense of myth as allegorical introduction, to shape the individual to his group. And in the Jungian interpretation of myth as group dream, symptomatic of archetypal urges within the depths of the psyche. The cruelty of certain incidents in the story reinforces the mythic folk-tale-like quality of parts of the novel. (207)

This critic has analyzed the text from the perspectives of myth. He borrows Durkheim and Jung in his study of American myth. He analyzes the text from the perspectives American myth in European disguise. So, the essential force of the story is mythic and the perspectives from which the story is distinctly American.

Furthermore, some critics illustrate that each on the three main characters, Tom Canty, Edward and Miles Hendon, realize this authentic self, which in the end proves to be as important as the social identity he lost. The ultimate aim of each son is to regain his identity.

*Pauper* recalls the lighter tone of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), but retains the political edge that is unmistakably Twain. During Mark Twain's writing of *The Prince and the Pauper*, he wrote to William Dean Howells in his *Notebooks and Journals*: "My idea is to afford a realizing sense of the exceeding severity of the laws of that day by inflicting some of their penalties upon the King himself and allowing him a chance to see the rest of them applied to others" (34). In this way, the novel is viewed from different perspectives; still the issue of identity of American people is untouched.

### **Mark Twain's Quest for American Nationalist Identity**

The approach to early American literature has generated a body of criticism that is dominated more by the thought of history than by the thought of literature, for many of the books and articles on the subject treat literary texts as documents in the evolution of the American experience or the American identity rather than as aesthetic objects. History has been an essential element for early American literature from the very beginning. The subject came into being, in the decades following the Revolution, in response to avowedly political, rather than literary demands. That is, it was not the perceived literariness of the colonial writings that recommended their inclusion in the ranks of American literature. What the early American writer did was to justify the rebellion as the culmination of nationalist historical identity.

The key to Mark Twain's mind is the concept of identity. In every one of his important books it is the identity of the individual on which his attention focuses. The quest for identity is central to both his writing and his personality. Its importance in his works can be traced to its importance in his life. The devices that recur in his stories – disguise, deception, self-deception and make-believe – all grow out of this concern with identity.

In Mark Twain's books a consistent pattern emerges. The hero, faced with some problem of choice or duality, solves or attempts to solve it by two responses: a change of identity and a change of place. The writer had done the same thing in his own life. He gets motion into his books by moving relentlessly, endlessly, restlessly from place to place. He gets the same motion even in his public appearances as he moved back and forth from chair to

lectern to table, trying to recapture that vital, essential motion of his life and nation.

In his books a trip or voyage permits the hero to sink, disguise or change his identity. Smith writes:

The trip, itself symbolic of the onward thrust of time or the life passage, helps to accelerate or emphasize the nature of that passage by heightening the colors of experience, by opening up new locales, conditions, personalities. It also allows the hero to appear unknown, unidentified, in new communities, trying out his identity, and where he may present himself in new roles.

(430)

To travel is therefore to expand one's identity. It is to accelerate experience by going out to meet it in all its variety. On a deeper level it is to be reborn. The road, the rivers are symbols of that passage we all take on our way into the world, or through it. We emerge to new life. That is what Mark's books are about.

Nearly everyone in Mark Twain's books, consciously or unconsciously, is playing a part. Colonel Mulberry Sellers in *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today* (1873) pretends to be a successful businessman and political power instead of the conspicuous failure he is. The Yankee plays at being a knight, a ruler, a magician. In *The American Claimant* (1892), Sally Sellers, to humor her father, has to be the Lady Gwendolen. Miles Herndon in *The Prince and the Pauper Prince* gracefully pretends to believe in the royalty of his little pauper.

As the idea of disguise fascinates him, Mark Twain plays with it in many ways, trying every approach from romance to burlesque, from detective

story to allegory. It is the basis for much of his humor, and one of the reasons why this humor is great and lasting is that it fools around with an idea that has serious and even tragic implications. In *The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1894) a pair of noble Italian twins turns up in the inconsequential river town of Dawson's Landing for no apparent reason. Any stranger would have done as well and would have been more plausible.

In this way, it can be argued, therefore, that the entire writing of Mark Twain is motivated by his quest for American nationalist identity. The following chapter analyzes the text, Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* basing the arguments on American Nationalist literary history and identity put forth discussed above.

The present work has been divided in four chapters, the first chapter highlights the biography of Mark Twain, a short note on the major works, a brief outline of *The Prince and the Pauper*, an introductory outline of the present study and a short review. The second chapter is entirely devoted to look at the concept and the issues of crisis of identity. Furthermore, it discusses American nationalist history and Mark Twain's quest for identity in his fiction. On the basis of second chapter the third chapter will be developed as textual analysis. It will sort out some extracts from the text to prove the hypothesis on separating the truth from falsity, which shows Twain's search for recovering the lost American history and true identity. The fourth chapter is the conclusion of this research. It will conclude with Mark Twain's attempt to explore the lost American history and true identity.

## **II. Theory of Identity**

Generally, identity refers to the element of distinguishing character or personality of an individual from others. Identity is the process how people describe or relate themselves to one another. Identity is the meaning or self-concept that one gives to oneself or the meaning in general that human beings give to themselves. In other words, it is the sum totality of values attached to individuals by an age and community in terms of their class, caste, group or culture and institution of any kind. Thus, with the change in values or the intellectual development in human history, man's concept of self has always been changed. It has sometimes only been modified and at other times radically changed. Identity is a current issue in the contemporary in the domain of nationality, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality and subcultures. Even though the concept of national identity was there in the ancient times when the nations were in the process of being constructed and recognized, identity becomes an issue when something previously assumed to be fixed and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty in a situation where there is multiplicity and plurality.

The term "identity" is a difficult subject to explain as Cornel West describes it as "elusive, amorphous and even vaporous one" (15). He believes that we all have multiple positions in terms of constructing our identities. So, there is no such thing as having one identity or of there being one essential identity that fundamentally defines who we actually are. People in different times and under different circumstances define identity as they feel that their identities are under threat. In this way, identity is associated with race, gender, ethnicity, religion and so on.

In fact, identity is very serious and crucial issue that human beings possess. So, while talking about identity, we have to look at the various ways in which human beings have constructed their desire for recognition, association and protection over time and in space, sometimes under circumstances not of their own choice. It is important to look at the processes that create identities. That desire for identity, a desire that Cornel West points out in his essay, "A Matter of Life and Death," is, for many people, worth dying for, as it is a matter of serious concern. So we arrive at the association: the negotiation of identity between the alternate poles of desire and death. As Cornel West has suggested, we construct our identities from the building blocks of our basic desires: desire for recognition, quest for visibility, the sense of being acknowledged, and a deep desire for association. West writes:

Identity is fundamentally about desire and death. Here you construct your identity is predicated on how you conceive of death: desire for recognition: quest for visibility: the sense of what Edward Said would call affiliation. It is the longing to belong, a deep, visceral need that most linguistically conscious animals who transact with an environment participate in. And then there is a profound desire for protection, for security, for safety, for surety. (15-16)

We long for belongingness. All these desires are expressed by symbols – pomp and ceremony, marches, festivals, national monuments and anthems, and so on. But in a world where symbols are all we are, all we have, holding on to these symbols becomes a matter of life and death. It is for the glorification of

these symbols that the bloody tale of national history is written and enacted in the campaigns of nationalists everywhere around the world.

The issue of national identity is often cited as a major contributing factor to many of the world's conflicts beginning from early America to present situation of Palestinians versus Jews in Israel, the troubles in Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Bangladesh, Armenia and Tibet. The issue of national identity is very important. It differs from racial, ethnic and regional identity and how it originated in both the West and the Third World. The relationship between national identity and language is important, but crucial to an enduring sense of national identity is religion and its capacity to separate groups of people.

National identity specially refers to the distinction of specific features of a group. A vast array of different criteria is used, with a range of different applications. Some person can have diverging personalities and beliefs, live in different places and speak different languages and still see each other as members of the same nation. Furthermore, there are cases in which a group of persons defines itself as a nation not based on the features they have, but for the features they lack or dislike. The feeling of belonging to a nation is then used as a defense against other groups, even if these other groups would appear to be closer in matters of ideological and cultural practices. Finally, members of a nation can emphasize their common history despite ethnic and other differences.

Identity has something to do with various kinds of desires to remain committed to and united with one's culture in the face of troubles such as the terrors of nature, the cruelties of fate, the unjustifiability of suffering. It

sounds very much like religion. But it is not religion in the theological sense, but in the etymological sense of “‘ligare,’ which means to bind” (Cornel 16). So, identity is about binding as it binds people their roots, culture, religion and language. On the one hand, that we can be bound through limited perspectives – parochialist, narrow, xenophobic. But on the other hand, it also means that we can be held together in the face of the terrors of nature, the cruelties of fate, and the need for some compensation for unjustified suffering: what theologians used to call the problem of evil.

But if we keep in mind the crucial interplay between desire and death, the issue of the quest for existential meaning and material resources comes. For identity, as West views, is about “bodies, land, labor, and instruments of production. It’s about the distribution of resources” (17), because the misdistribution of resources displaces marginalized people in society forcing them to identity crisis. So we must always keep in mind the role of material resources and the various systems that generate their distribution and consumption. There has to be a dialectical interplay in talking about these things; and of course that's one of the problems of a narrow and xenophobic identity politics or political positions. Such positions cause us to lose sight of the fact that we linguistically conscious animals have, up to this moment, had to labor under a radically unequal distribution of resources.

The issue of identity becomes prominently manifest in a multiethnic, multicultural, multireligious and multiracial situation. So, we always understand identity in relation to diversity and plurality. Within the pluralist framework that seeks to contain and resolve the debate, identity is taken as “the referential sign of a fixed set of customs, practices, and meanings, an



enduring heritage, a readily identifiable sociological category, a set of shared traits and/or experiences” (Scott 5). ‘Diversity’ refers to the plurality of identity, and it is seen as a condition of human existence rather than as the effect of an enunciation of difference that constitutes hierarchies and asymmetries of power. When diversity is seen as a condition of existence, the questions become whether and how much of it is useful to recognize. So, amidst diversity, pride in one's heritage is an important ingredient in citizenship, particularly for those whose identities and viewpoints have been excluded or marginalized in the history of a nation.

Identity has become the central area of concern in cultural studies during the 1990s. Cultural studies explores how we come to be the kinds of people we are, what we are, how we are produced as subjects, and how we identify with descriptions of ourselves as male and female, black or white, young or old, Asians or Europeans. As perceived within the domain of cultural studies, identities are not the things which exist simply there with universal qualities or practices, rather they are discursive constructions. It means that identities are constructed by reigning discourses. Thus, in this sense, identities are constituted or made. Balibar perceives: “Identity is never a peaceful acquisition: it is claimed as a guarantee against a threat of annihilation that can be figured by another identity or by erasing of identities” (186). Balibar means to say that people tend to claim their identities when they feel socially, politically, culturally as well as economically vulnerable. In other words, they sense the danger of their identities being threatened by another or foreign identities.

Identity is the reflection of an individual's desire, power and discourse. It is the traditional or existing condition of an individual in terms of nationality, religion, gender and race. That is why Balibar calls it the "discourse of tradition" (187). And the privileged name of this tradition is culture. As identity is associated with culture it is not immune to representation and identification. For critics like Stuart Hall identity is a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within representation. He means to say that there is no real identity but identification. In this regard Etienne Balibar says: "In reality there are no identities, only identifications: either with the institution itself or other subjects by the intermediary of the institution. Or identities are only the ideal goal of processes identification [. . .]" (187). There are, according Hall, at least two different ways of thinking about 'cultural identity'. The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self' which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Stuart Hall writes: "Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provides us, as 'one people' with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning" (111). Such a conception of cultural identity plays a critical role in the postcolonial struggles which have so profoundly reshaped our world.

As identity is associated with different social institutions and agents which are constructed by a diversity of discourses, there is no necessary relation among them but a constant movement of over determination and displacement. Chantal Mouffe comments:

The identity of such a multiple and contradictory subject is therefore always contingent and precarious, temporarily fixed at the intersection of those subject positions and dependent on specific forms of identification. This plurality does not involve the co-existence one by one, of plurality of subject positions but the constant subversion and overdetermination of one by the others [. . .] (33)

Globalization has increased the migration rate and has altered the relations between Western and other cultures by taking away the sense of identity of individuals across the nation. Contemporary identities are therefore fluid or consciously delimited or almost lost. The notion of identity is elusive and often becomes a subject of doubt unless it is in crisis. When the existing status of an individual is challenged, there comes the crisis of identity. This crisis is a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a person's sense of identity becomes insecure, typically due to a change in their expected aims or role in society. Crisis of identity results from the lack of location to a specific culture or nation. Such lack of location has become the site of conflict because of globalization, migration and the politics closely associated with these processes. Such global politics of difference makes this very notion of identity hybrid, not a fixed concept but rather a marginal and diasporic one. The term has something to do with the traumatic colonial experience, since it emerges at the ambivalent relationship between colonizers and colonized. The colonial settlers, once they arrived in an alien land, felt the necessity of establishing new identities. In colonized society there emerged a binary relationship between the people of two races, cultures and languages.

People express their identities as a matter of everyday cultural practice. Hence, it is more rigorously expressed in the situation when the identity itself is in question. People often disregard the notion of identity when it is not questioned i.e. when their culture provide them stable identity. The old identities, which established the social world for so long, are in the ebb, giving rise to the new identities and fragmenting the subjectivity of modern individuals. This so-called crisis of identity is seen as part of a wider process of change, which is dislocating the central structures and social process to undermine the framework, which give individuals stable anchorage in the social world. Hall claims “modern identities are being ‘decentered,’ that is dislocated or fragmented” (274). He sees the fragmentation of the cultural landscapes of class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity race and nationality undermines our sense of ourselves as integrated subjects. He further quotes Kobena Mercer and says that “identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis; when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable, is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty” (275). Hall, thus, posits the problem of identities in what he calls “structural and institutional change” (227). Thus the issue of identity is central to cultural studies , in so far as cultural studies examines the contexts within which and through which both individuals and groups construct, negotiate and defend their identity or self understanding. Cultural studies draws on those approaches that hold that identity is a response to something external and different from it. A number of critics now agree that many writers from across the world find a unique and fertile place from where they can write their anguish towards the white domination over blacks, as well as they can express a hunting search for their

own identities. They think themselves as racially exiled and continuously try to rejoin themselves with their own identities as can be seen in their writings.

Such identities are forever questioned and actual crisis remain at the heart. So, the crisis of identity is felt when the cultures are cut across and intersect natural frontiers, and when people are dispersed forever or temporarily from their homelands. Such people retain strong links with places of origins and their tradition. They bear upon the dominant culture but seek the traces at particular culture, traditions, languages and histories by which they were shaped.

The kind of identity that is being discussed here is American national identity following the War of Independence (1775-1781). Following this event, Americans have always defined themselves not by their racial, religious, and ethnic identity but by their common values and belief in individual freedom.

When we recognize the very different status of identity – the different political status – between identity from above and from below, we fail to speak of some of the larger identities that shape us. For example, national identity, which is very different from having a nation-state, is one of the most powerful means of constructing desire and death in our present moment. It functions on a different axis from that of race or gender, but with dialectic affinities. The reason is that there are neglected subjects who are deeply linked to national identity. That's one of the fascinating things about whole identity. Though they might be thinking about particular regional, racial and gender identity, they are also the most rampant mainstream nationalists in the nation.

To sum up the whole chapter on the issue of identity, identity is the reflection of an individual's desire, power and discourse. It is the traditional or existing condition of an individual in terms of nationality, religion, gender and race. Identity is associated with different social institutions and agents which are constructed by a diversity of discourses. It refers to various kinds of desires to remain committed to and united with one's culture in the face of troubles such as the terrors of nature, the cruelties of fate, the unjustifiability of suffering and discrimination within one's own country and outside. So identity is central to human existence.

### Chapter III

#### Search for American Identity in *The Prince and the Pauper*

Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881) is based on the author's experiences and roots as the novel is ingrained in American consciousness. In the novel, Twain explores the American consciousness in European disguise because he uses the European characters and setting. As he presents the "prince" and the "pauper" in the obverse roles, he reveals the issue of separating the true from the false identity. His unconscious preoccupation with the elusive identity in the aftermath of American independence not only recurs in this work but haunts his life as well. Thus, in the novel by presenting the Prince and the Pauper in the reverse roles, Twain emphasizes on separating the truth from falsity, which shows his search for recovering the lost American historical and nationalistic identity. In this way, the novel allegorizes the early form of American consciousness and dream.

One of the first things which reflects Mark Twain's search for identity in the novel is his concern for his attempt to resolve the issue of double consciousness which is associated with his life. Twain's narration of doubles and imposters in this novel shows his enduring insecurity and his obsession with authenticity and the idea of true identity. As he was preoccupied with these things throughout his life, he focuses on that double life as he himself was a Southerner living in the North, a frontiersman living in genteel company, an American in Europe, a rebel in the Gilded Age – the era of rapid economic and population growth in the United States during the post-Civil War period. Jerry Griswold observes in the introduction to the novel, "Twain often wondered whether he was living a lie and would be caught at it" (ix).

This is what the novel dramatizes. In the novel, Twain's orphaned sons: the Prince, Edward Tudor and the Pauper, Tom Canty makes an attempt to recover their lost fathers, that is American historical and cultural preoccupations of his countrymen. So, the beliefs of the New World individual's psychology and the myths of American identity merge in this novel albeit through the disguise of the European setting.

In order to establish the historical and nationalistic identity during the time when there was British rule in America, Mark Twain makes use of symbolic and mythological dimension. Europe in the novel is a mythopoetic realm of symbolic social extremes and of fairy-tale-like father-son relationships. Twain's characters are all supposedly English, and the action takes place in the fictionalized past of sixteenth century England. But Twain implicitly relates to the socio-political situation of America. His central characters are the historical figures: the Prince and later boy-king Edward VI, and the Pauper, Tom Canty who finally obtains affluence. Though the details of the setting and story are authentic, the essential force of the story is mythic and the perspective from which the story is told is distinctly American. In the novel, the kingship and pauperdom are significant not because they are historical facts, but because they are metaphors for social and personal conditions, conditions from which each boy, Prince and Pauper, imagines an escape, thereby raising the issue of social and political identity. Here, Twain raises the issue of identity through the allegorization of author's own life and the social condition of America. His search for personal and social identity is reflected through the prince and pauper, whose characters are stylized into complementary compatibility, which makes an exchange of roles possible.



Each boy is inherently noble and imaginative as the prince is brave and strong enough to meet his misadventures among the “dreadful rabble,” which inhabited Tom Canty’s house, and the pauper is wise enough to meet the challenges of life at the king’s court (11).

The American nature of Twain’s treatment of his special European material becomes clear when we examine his themes closely. The centrality of ordinary character, particularly in the person of innocent Tom Canty at the court, but also in the spontaneous responses and positive inner resources of Miles Hendson and Edward, both in manners and in moral questions, suggests the continuity of Europe and America in Twain’s imagination at this time. The ultimate aim of each son is to regain his identity, which is initially the identity conferred upon him by being his particular father’s son. Here, the father figure symbolically refers to the American national history without which its people are rendered an orphan. Orphanhood, we can argue, is a characteristically American condition for a nation of immigrants and uprooted American people. Though Tom Canty does not have desire to claim an identity related to his father’s which is associated with impoverishment, he does have to abandon an identity based on being the son of a man who is not his father, and he aspires an identity revealed to him by his surrogate father because he is disguised as a Prince by accident. He represents the outcaste seeking to establish a place for himself in a stratified society. The circumstances he is thrown into, which range from extreme poverty and abuse to the pinnacle of wealth and power, present him with tests of character in which he must conduct himself well in order to attain a state in which his inner character is manifest and acknowledged through his social role, a theme consonant with the “rags to

riches” typical genre of American writing (Stahl 209). Symbolically, just like the pauper is shown in “rags” almost on every page of the novel, the condition of majority of American was almost similar. As Twain writes, “He would go forth in his rags and beg a few farthings, eat his poor crust, take his customary cuffs and abuse, and then stretch himself upon his handful of foul straw, and resume his empty grandeurs in his dreams” (12). This also reflects a kind of early form of American dream of moving into prosperity by overcoming poverty, problems and obstacle. Here, “cuffs” hint at the hegemonic colonial clutch of Britain on America, which was a hindrance on America’s national identity, development and prosperity. So, Twain makes Tom dream of grandeurs:

Privately, after a while, Tom organized a royal court! He was the prince; his special comrades were guards, chamberlains, equerries, lords and ladies in waiting, and the royal family. Daily the mock prince was received with elaborate ceremonials borrowed by Tom from his romantic readings; daily the great affairs of the mimic kingdom were discussed in the royal council, and daily his mimic highness issued decrees to his imaginary armies, navies, and viceroyalties. (12)

As America was not a sovereign and prosperous country in the sixteenth century as Americans had to fight the War of Independence, Mark Twain’s objective in writing this novel was to make American people aware of distinctive American socio-political, cultural and national identity.

Gradually, Tom’s reading and dreaming about princely life “wrought such a strong effect upon him that he began to act the prince, unconsciously”

(12). His speech and manners become curiously ceremonious and courtly, to the vast admiration and amusement of his intimates. But Tom's influence among these young people begins to grow now, day by day; and in time he comes to be looked up to, by them, with a sort of wondering awe, as a superior being. In other words, Tom helps them to imagine change and good in the face of impoverishment.

The symbolic American individual is wittily represented in the novel by the concept of disinherited son, the son who is actually or symbolically orphaned as several American writers during those times actually lost their fathers due to American War of Independence. In addition, many writers and intellectuals were forced to seek refuge in other countries. This situation made them search for their American identity at that time. It reflects the preoccupation with orphanhood shared by American writers such as Horatio Alger and Frances Hodgson Burnett. Loss of parents is a common, symbolically powerful experience. Oscar Handlin has sadly discussed the loss of parental authority and of continuity between the generations among immigrant families, even when children have not literally become orphans.

In Twain's other fiction such as *Huck Finn*, Twain's characters either achieve an authentic self at the cost of social position or they get a social position at the cost of the authentic self. However, in this novel Tom Canty and Edward are able to achieve both authentic self and social position. While *The Prince and The Pauper* is also circular in the sense that Edward and Miles return to their original social positions – while Tom moves from pauperdom to a comfortable position, – in the book with the European setting Mark Twain imagined multiple father-son relationships that issue in a form of generational

succession the paradox is that in this American form of inheritance the son has to win the right to inherit his father's legacy and even, in one case, becomes his father's symbolic father. Twain implies that the aid a father can give is only equal to or less than the inner resources a son must have to achieve his goals.

The novel lays emphasis on the father-son relationships which thrive on the idea of American oral traditional inheritance. The transmission of the story itself is attributed to story-telling from father to son, as indicated in the prefatory note: "I will set down a tale as it was told to me by one who had it of his father, which latter had it of father-and so on, back and still back, three hundred years and more, the fathers transmitting it to the sons and so preserving it" (8). The story itself represents a legacy handed down from father to son, for many generations, in a stylized fashion that is reminiscent of the oral transmission of fairy tales. This is appropriate, for the story needs to be read on one level as a fairy tale of good, evil, and Manichaen good-and-evil father-figures the mythic import of the story is that each son has a configuration of three father-figures, ranging from good to evil, each son is thrust into a society which denies his identity as his physical father's son, he must regain that identity but do it largely out his own resources. For example, Tom Canty has three symbolic fathers. His physical father, John Canty is ignorant, brutish, and cruel. He beats his son and exploits him in every way he can. He is a drunkard and a representative of the dregs of society. Twain writes:

he [Tom] knew his father would curse him and thrash him first,  
and that when he was done the awful grandmother would do it all

over again and improve on it; and that away in the night his starving mother would slip to him stealthily with any miserable scrap or crust she had been able to save for him by going hungry herself, notwithstanding she was often caught in that sort of treason and soundly beaten for it by her husband. (11)

He lives a wretched life, and indeed, knows no other. Every morning Tom is sent off to beg in the street. Here, he becomes a street boy without any identity. If he comes home empty-handed, his father and his grandmother would soundly beat him. This reflects the plight of the poor children in America at the time. The writer implies that they are required to work hard to establish their identity in society.

The novelist makes Tom learn some spiritual lessons from his spiritual father. Tom's spiritual father, more than the religious sense, his good father, is kindly, elderly priest, Father Andrew, who has been forced into retirement on a scant pension by a harsh edict of Henry VIII. The priest teaches the boy Latin and introduces him to the romance of folk tales and the world of old books – American traditional knowledge. By doing so, he provides the boy with means of escapes from the ugly, narrow confines of his day-to-day life of begging, starvation, and physical abuse. Once he is at the king's court, he meets another of his father-figures: the aged king Henry, an awesome personage to little Tom Canty, but someone who treats him with kindness and indulgence, despite the real prince's statement that his father did not always spare him with his tongue, and that he had "not a doll's temper" (61). Henry soon dies, and John Canty, significantly, kills the one man in his town, who pleads for Tom/Edward when the boy appears to have lost his mind. And Tom is left to fend

for himself. Tom has to act out of his own resources and impulses at the palace. As in the ordeal formula common to the genteel fiction of the period, his innate gifts prove largely adequate to the challenge of the circumstances he must face. However, Twain's narrative is distinct from typical ordeal formula fiction because there is no permanent return to the safety of adult protection possible.

Edward has a similar configuration of father-figures. He also has to rely on his own resources despite the fact that he is aided by Miles, a kind, courageous, and protective father-figure. Henry, his real father, is a harsh ruler but he is no longer of practical importance to Edward after the moment the boy is kicked out into the street by the disrespectful guard at the palace gate. The soldier mistakenly kicks out the prince as he is dressed in pauper's rags. The soldier says: "Thou beggar's spawn [. . .] Be off, thou crazy rubbish!" (19). The jeering crowd closes round the poor little prince, and hustles him far down the road, hooting him, and shouting: "Way for his Royal Highness! Way for the Prince of Wales!" (19). This also allegorizes the invasion of the British in American land and driving away the rightful rulers. So, this dramatizes the chasing away the false occupiers from the American land, paving the way for the distinct American identity.

In his attempt to establish the issue of identity, Mark Twain opposes the natural, authentic characters to the artificialities and cruelties of a Manichaeian Europe. In the struggle to regain their social identities, each of the three main characters, Tom Canty, Edward, Prince of Wales, and Miles Hendon realizes his authentic self, which in the end proves to be as important as the social identity he lost. Though Edward becomes king, Tom Canty achieves the post

of chief governor of Christ's Hospital, and Miles regains his inheritance, these destinies are not as important as the proving of their authentic characters that each goes through.

The Prince is finally left alone by the "rabble" that has harried him into London, and he wanders aimlessly about, not knowing where he is until he comes to Christ's Hospital. There, he sees some children dressed as apprentices, playing in the yard. He talks to them and announces his claim that he is Edward, Prince of Wales; his actions at first amuse the boys, but then they begin to mock him. He says: "I am the prince; and it ill beseemeth you that feed upon the king my father's bounty to use me so. Angry and frustrated, he kicks one of the boys and threatens them all with the gallows, whereupon they beat him and set their dogs on him" (21). The street boys mock Edward calling him "beggar and his grace's messenger" (21). But Edward keeps insisting that he is the true prince. He further says: "I am none of theirs, but the true prince, and I shall have mine own again" (22). He also vows to provide learning for the children of Christ's Hospital, not just bread and shelter. And now and then his mind reverts to his treatment by those rude Christ's Hospital boys, and he says,

When I am king, they shall not have bread and shelter only, but also teachings out of books; for a full belly is little worth where the mind is starved, and the heart. I will keep this diligently in my remembrance, that this day's lesson be not lost upon me, and my people suffer thereby; for learning softeneth the heart and breedeth gentleness and charity. (22)

This quoted statement of Edward reflects American people's strong desire to achieve the authority to work for democracy, liberation, freedom and prosperity for their distinctive identity. This also reminds us of the colonial time when America was under British domination. So, this allegorization reflects American people's search for social, cultural and political identity. Such awareness in American people inspired them to wage War of Independence against the British rulers.

As night comes on, the bruised, battered, and muddied prince is confused and lost. However, he remembers Tom's story and begins to look for Offal Court. John Canty, who has been looking for his son, collars and drags him home and again a crowd gathers to jeer as Edward claims to be the prince and demands to be taken immediately to the king. Everyone he has met outside the palace walls believes that he is mad — nothing more than a common beggar who has lost his wits. The prince has to go through much suffering and hurdles before he is able to establish his worth and identity. When the crowd annoys him, he implores:

Oh, jest not, palter not, delay not!--I am worn, I am wounded, I can bear no more. Take me to the king my father, and he will make thee rich beyond thy wildest dreams. Believe me, man, believe me!--I speak no lie, but only the truth!--put forth thy hand and save me! I am indeed the Prince of Wales! (22)

His appeal and moan yield no fruit as people take Edward a false person. As Edward is forcibly taken to Canty house, he is beaten and manhandled by Canty. The prince proclaims himself to be Edward, Prince of Wales. He declares:



‘Tis but ill-breeding in such as thou to command me to speak. I tell thee now, as I told thee before, I am Edward, Prince of Wales, and none other. [. . .] Thy son is well, and hath not lost his wits, good dame. Comfort thee: let me to the palace where he is, and straightway will the King my father restore him to thee.

(46)

At this, Tom’s mother rushes to him, convinced that he is mad, and the prince tells her again that he is not her son: his father is King of England, whereupon she can do nothing but wail brokenheartedly. Tom’s sister pleads with her father to be gentle with the boy, saying that rest will heal his madness. She says, “An thou wilt but let him to bed, father, rest and sleep will heal his madness: prithee, do” (47). Canty, however, asks what the boy has managed to beg that day, as he says, “The morrow must we pay two pennies to him that owns this hole; two pennies, mark ye--all this money for a half-year's rent, else out of this we go. Show what thou’st gathered with thy lazy begging” (48). And when the Prince dismisses such “sordid matters,” Canty and Tom’s grandmother thoroughly beat him and send him to bed (48). The purpose of Twain’s narration of the suffering of the real prince at the hands of Tom’s drunkard father is the means of test and trial which the prince must pass so as to eventually prove his true identity. This reference is given in connection with the difficulty of separating true identity from false identity in Twain’s early America.

Everybody in the novel is confused and goes through the severe sense of identity crisis. Even the mother, who is supposed to recognize her offspring in most difficult case, is unable to figure out anything. As she lays thinking

and mourning, the suggestion begins to creep into her mind that there is an undefinable something about this boy that has been lacking in Tom Canty, mad or sane:

She could not describe it, she could not tell just what it was, and yet her sharp mother-instinct seemed to detect it and perceive it. What if the boy were really not her son, after all? Oh, absurd! She almost smiled at the idea, spite of her griefs and troubles. No matter, she found that it was an idea that would not 'down,' but persisted in haunting her. It pursued her, it harassed her, it clung to her, and refused to be put away or ignored. (48-49)

At last she realizes that she is not going to have any peace for herself until she is able to devise a test that should prove, clearly and without question, whether the boy is her son or not, and so banish these wearing and worrying doubts. She sets her wits to work at once to plan that test. Though she is able to soothe the prince back to sleep, she is left more confused than ever.

At the time of great suffering at the hands of John Canty and the crowd in the street, Edward comes across Miles Hendon, who is disinherited Nobleman, who acts as a real father figure for Edward. As Miles Hendon takes Edward away from the Guildhall and toward London Bridge, they move quickly through the streets, where they receive word that King Henry VIII had died. Thus, Edward is now indeed King of all England – and most likely the only living soul who mourns the death of Henry. The prince feels the loss of his father keenly. Tears come to his eyes, especially when the crowd yells, “Long live King Edward the Sixth” (57). “Ah,” he thinks how grand and

strange it seems – I AM KING!” (57). Despite his sorrow, however, Edward is thrilled that — despite everything — he is now King of England.

How Hendon acts as a father figure is substantiated when they are stopped by John Canty, who reaches out for the prince and threatens to beat him for escaping. Hendon again intercedes, threatening Canty with his sword, and Canty slinks away, “muttering threats and curses” (59). While in Hendon’s apartment, the prince falls asleep on the bed immediately, leaving orders to be awakened when food arrives. Hendon is amused by the boy’s actions – which are, however, truly in character with his claim to be Prince of Wales. Already, Hendon has become fond of the boy, and he resolves to humor him and care for him, even if it means acting as the boy’s “retainer” (61). Here, Hendon acts as a mentor for the prince who has no alternative but to undergo tough tests in order to regain his lost identity of rightful prince.

Miles Hendon himself is deceived by his cruel brother as his mother has died in his childhood. Though his elder brother, Arthur was good, he describes his younger brother Hugh as a “mean spirit, covetous, treacherous, vicious, underhanded – a reptile” because he persuades their father that Edward has done immoral activities (62). Hugh wants to usurp their cousin, Edith’s fortune by falsely proclaiming that he loves her. In fact, Edward loves Edith. His brother Hugh turned these faults to good account as he saw that his Brother Arthur’s health was but indifferent, and hoping the worst might work him profit he was swept out of the path. His brother did deftly magnify Edward’s faults and make them crimes. So Hugh, by his own means, was able to convince their father, and bribed evidence of servants and other lying knaves,

that Edward wanted to carry off Edith and marry with her in rank defiance of the father's will.

Thus, Hugh succeeds in punishing Edward for crimes which he has not committed. The father Henry also wants him to teach a lesson and some degree of wisdom as he says that three years of banishment from home and England might make a soldier and a real man Miles Hendon relates his banishment and prison life as he was held captive by other soldiers:

I fought out my long probation in the continental wars, tasting sumptuously of hard knocks, privation, and adventure; but in my last battle I was taken captive, and during the seven years that have waxed and waned since then, a foreign dungeon hath harboured me. Through wit and courage I won to the free air at last, and fled hither straight; and am but just arrived, right poor in purse and raiment, and poorer still in knowledge of what these dull seven years have wrought at Hendon Hall, its people and belongings. (63)

When the two finally arrive at Hendon Hall, Miles is shocked to find that his older brother and his father have died; even worse, his conniving younger brother Hugh has assumed control of his business and estate and taken Edith for himself in marriage. No servants claim to recognize Miles; even charming Edith fails to acknowledge him out of fear of Hugh. In fact, Hugh has Miles and Edward thrown into prison, falsely accusing them of being beggars and vagabonds.

Miles Hendon and Edward are treated very badly in the crowded cells in the prison; the two friends are chained in a large room where persons charged

with trifling offences are commonly kept. They have company among twenty manacled and fettered prisoners here, of both sexes and of varying ages,--an obscene and noisy gang. "Wrapped in prison blankets of a soiled and tattered condition, Hendon and the King pass a troubled night" (144). But gradually Hendon's confused and tormenting thoughts settled down into some sort of order, and then his mind is centered itself upon Edith. In this way, Hendon suffers a lot before his real worth or identity is established.

Getting and maintaining one's identity is really difficult task, which leads to crisis of identity. While the true king wanders about the land "poorly clad, poorly fed, cuffed and derided, herded with thieves and murderers in a jail, and called idiot and imposter by all" (147) the mock-King, Tom Canty, enjoys his adventures at the palace. He has to pass through some sort of sufferings as he is not habituated to living a royal life style. At first he feels as though he has been imprisoned. Even the process of getting dressed takes fourteen people. Eating is as difficult an understanding. Moreover, he has to worry about all manner of dull work: petitions are read, proclamations heard, and patents and all manner of wordy, repetitious and wearisome papers had to be attended to. It is all very drab for him. But then Tom meets Edward's former servant boy, a bright lad who tells Tom all about the ways of the castle, its various degrees of rank and file, and how to deal with the palace intrigue. He proves to be a great help for Tom. The unseasoned yet clever boy uses the information he has gained to become comfortable as a prince, and to reassure his "caretakers" that he has not gone mad. He eventually succeeds so well at this that, after the death of King Henry, Tom actually looks forward to obtaining England's throne.

Finally, all of the people of England come to Westminster Abbey to witness the coronation of King Edward. As the archbishop of Canterbury lifts the crown to place it on Tom's head, the real prince Edward arrives there and cries: "I forbid you to set the crown of England upon that forfeited head. I am the King!" (169). At this, Tom is delighted to see Edward and steps down to allow the ragged youth to take his place on the throne. But the crowd is unconvinced; it demands that the real Edward must prove his claim to the crown. For weeks the Great Seal had been missing, and the true Prince of Wales would know where it was. After thinking for some time, Edward remembers where he had last placed it. He announces:

My Lord St. John, go you to my private cabinet in the palace--for none knoweth the place better than you--and, close down to the floor, in the left corner remotest from the door that opens from the ante-chamber, you shall find in the wall a brazen nail-head; press upon it and a little jewel-closet will fly open which not even you do know of--no, nor any sould else in all the world but me and the trusty artisan that did contrive it for me. The first thing that falleth under your eye will be the Great Seal--fetch it hither. (171)

This was evidence to all; Edward Tudor is immediately crowned King Edward VI. Though Edward lives for only a few years, but during those years he reigns most mercifully. Miles was made Earl of Kent, while Miles' brother is stripped of his land and cast into prison. Tom Canty is commissioned as the King's Ward, and as Chief Governor over Christ's hospital, a shelter that feed the minds, hearts, and stomachs of orphans and children of indigent people.

Frequently reminiscing about his experience as a peasant, King Edward demonstrates great compassion during a harsh period of English history. Because he understands his people, and rules them in love. This is what Twain envisages for the American people at the hands of the rulers, be they kings, presidents and ministers. This is the advocacy of freedom, democracy and prosperity which secures one's socio-cultural and political identity.

As Mark Twain focuses on the proving of one's worth and identity, he makes his characters go through difficult trials and tests. While talking about the issue of identity, what Twain opposes the natural, authentic characters to the artificialities and cruelties of a Manichaeian Europe. While they struggle to regain their social identities, each of the three main characters, Tom Canty, Edward, Prince of Wales, and Miles Hendon realizes their authentic selves, which in the end proves to be as important as the social identity he lost. Edward becomes king, Tom Canty achieves the post of chief governor of Christ's Hospital, and Miles regains his inheritance. These destinies are not as important as the proving of their authentic characters that each goes through. Twain makes each of these characters transform from "rags to riches." All this discussion reflects Twain's search for American identity.

In this way, *The Prince and the Pauper* is a story, on its face, of disorder reordered, of inversion re-righted, of misrepresentation revealed, of misrecognition corrected, and of true identity recognized and established. Its central subject, in other words, is the relationship between social order and representation. True, in its congruence between the return of order and the correction of misrecognition, its ambition appears to be to resolve the tension between 'truthful,' 'realistic' representation and legitimate power—an

ambition that seems to have alienated many twentieth-century critics. But the common dismissals of the book as clichéd, as melodramatic, or as acquiescence to a genteel literature that forgot its collusion with cultural power overlook its self-conscious rehearsals of questions of representation, especially the spectacular, theatrical representation of social order. Far from a compliance with northern middle-class equations of truth, social order, and genteel representation, Twain's novel radically renders suspect the purpose and status of any public spectacle. Then, in accord with his anxiety about the degeneration of both public symbol and raucous burlesque, he also renders suspect the forces of inversion and disorder.

*The Prince and the Pauper* as an example of a kind of representation is spectacular staging of sovereignty, authority, and status. Twain notes that it is carefully arranged by rank, categorized by hierarchy (esquires, judges, aldermen, ambassadors, nobles), with coats of arms, banners, and shields whose armorial bearings are all highly visible, the most prominent being those attendants dressed in the prince's liveries and embroidered with his blazon. The Coronation Day 'Recognition Procession' too, while it has its dimensions of 'show' in the flame jets, smoke, and explosions emitted at its starting point from the Tower of London, is a carefully ordered parade in which each has his place, a spectacular display of people ranged by "birth, métier, and wealth: the king, the king's guard, the protector, nobles, vassals, the lord mayor, aldermen, officers and members of guilds, the artillery company", and so on (300). A Coronation Day historical pageant "representing the king's immediate progenitors" and "a bewildering succession of spectacular and symbolical tableaux, each of which typified and exalted some virtue, or talent, or merit, of



the little king's" (302-3), declare a purpose more strongly symbolic than bewildering, and they crystallize the function of all this display: power and virtue are being dramatized, the origins and genealogy of authority are (apparently) being traced, and a rightful social order is (supposedly) getting clarified, in which the ideal identity of the king is expressed, and the identities of all others are defined in relation to it. The sheer excess of this pageantry should signal to us Twain's overt concern with questions of identity.

Important, of course, for the integrity of such symbolism, the person whose identity these spectacles are meant to express is not there; the background the symbol is absent. Behind the elaborate rankings of the "River Pageant," designed to individuate, express, and secure the identity of the king, is Tom Canty, the impostor. No flow exists from divine or ideal authority to the king's, or from kingly authority through this symbolic hierarchy and the social order. Edward's conviction that he is "the very source of power in this broad realm" (281) is simply wrong; the structure of power carries on without concern for the existence or presence of its supposed origin. The 'Recognition Procession,' the formal acknowledgment of the sovereign by his subjects, is a performance of misrecognition, unstopably conferring kingly identity on Tom, not Edward. In sum, the ease with which Tom can take Edward's place and act as king, and the fact that Tom functions as king despite announcing his identity as a pauper, reveals the kingship as a function of costume and his audience's collective (and to some degree enforced) suspension of disbelief. *The Prince and the Pauper* underscores strongly the power of monarchical theater as the authenticator rather than the expression of kingship and power. In other words, Mark Twain focuses on the process of how reclaiming one's

identity is dramatized. The pageantry and spectacles constitute authority rather than express or objectify an essential social order, a fact that, while it is somewhat hidden away, begins to undo this ostensible story of temporary inversion and rightful reestablishment.

The rightful reestablishment of social order through the correction of misrepresentation, in fact, never securely takes place. For the moment in which the true king is to be spectacularly recognized and the misinterpretations of identity are to be clarified is a moment of uncertainty. As the lord protector says after quizzing Edward about kingly matters, his right answers are not proofs. What is taken as proof is the fact that Edward can remember where he put the Great Seal, which had been missing since he left the palace, a privileged memory, seemingly, because of the authenticating office of the seal. However, while Twain's interest in the reliability of indexical signs makes it highly significant that he chose the Great Seal as the authenticator of Edward's identity, the "proof" here is not a bodily impression or sign—not, in fact, even an impression of the seal; instead, Edward's memory of where it is verifies his kingship. This proof of identity is even more pronouncedly cast adrift onto the uncertainties of memory and testimony. Edward's body fails to express his identity; authentication has to come from an external sign with so much of trial and test.

All this above analysis reflects Twain's strong sense of nostalgia for the disappearing American frontier, his growing concern over the assimilation of Native American cultures, and his continual search for a sense of personal and national identity in the early days of American Independence.

## Chapter IV

### Conclusion

This British colonization caused dramatic upheaval among the indigenous civilizations in America, both indirectly through British military force and directly through cultural disruption and introduced diseases. In such a scenario, it was very difficult to directly oppose the British. So, Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* allegorizes the situation of America through disguise as he uses European characters and setting. This allegory reflects Twain's search for American social, cultural and political identity, which would ultimately pave way for freedom and prosperity. In his attempt to establish their identity, Twain opposes the natural, authentic characters to the artificialities and cruelties of a Manichaeian Europe by reversing the roles of the prince and the pauper. In the struggle to regain their social identities, each of the three main characters, Tom Canty, Edward, Prince of Wales, and Miles Hendon goes through difficult trials and tests before they realize their authentic selves, which in the end proves to be as important as the social identity they lost. Eventually, Edward becomes king, Tom Canty achieves the post of chief governor of Christ's Hospital, and Miles regains his inheritance. But these destinies are not so important. What is really important is the arduous task of proving of their authentic self and characters that each of them goes through.

The novel represents Mark Twain's attempt to explore American historical identity. In order to dramatize the American theme "rags to riches," Twain, sets the book in 1547, in a disguised manner as he uses European character and setting. Moreover, he presents the roles of the prince and the pauper in obverse roles and makes them pass through many difficult tests

before they are able to establish their identities. Twain presents the two boys in identical appearance: Tom Canty, a pauper who lives with his abusive father in Offal Court, London, and Prince Edward son of Henry VIII of England. Due to a series of circumstances, the boys accidentally replace each other, and the boys Tom and Edward display considerable wisdom in their decisions. In many ways, the book is a social satire, particularly compelling in its condemnation of the inequality that existed between the classes in Tudor England. But it crosses the boundary of England and is engrained in American consciousness, which helps to establish American social, cultural identity.

Another American theme is the centrality of natural character, particularly in the person of innocent Tom Canty at the palace. It is also seen in the spontaneous responses and positive inner resources of Miles Hendson and Edward, both in manners and in moral questions. The ultimate aim of each son is to regain his identity, which is initially the identity conferred upon him by being his particular father's son. Here, the father figure symbolically refers to the American national history without which its people are an orphan. Orphanhood is a characteristically American condition for a nation of immigrants and uprooted persons during colonial times.

As every character undergoes difficult test of suffering, finally they are all rewarded. Miles was made Earl of Kent, while Miles' brother is stripped of his land and sent into prison. Tom Canty is given the responsibility as the King's Ward, and as Chief Governor over Christ's hospital, a shelter that feed the minds, hearts, and stomachs of orphans and children of indigent people. Frequently reminiscing about his experience as a peasant, King Edward demonstrates great compassion during a harsh period of English history.

Because he understands his people, and rules them in love. This is what Twain envisages for the American people at the hands of the rulers, be they kings, presidents and ministers. This is the advocacy of freedom, democracy and prosperity which secures one's socio-cultural and political identity.

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