

## **CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE UNITED STATES: GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT**

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**Abstract:** The article gives a brief overview of the formation and development of American children's literature. It emphasizes that American children's prose was originally formed under the influence of culture and literature brought to the modern U.S. territory by immigrants from various European countries, local Indian folklore, and individual research by artists. After gaining independence, a unique children's prose was formed in the United States. One of the brightest representatives of this literature is Mark Twain, who has been scientifically proven to be recognized as a prolific writer in children's prose.

**Keywords and phrases:** child, image, novel, proverb, story, children's literature, children's prose, children's author, Mark Twain, heartfelt, adventure, artistic.

**INTRODUCTION**

It is known that from the XVII-XVIII centuries began to intensify with the influx of people from different countries from Europe to what is now North America. They also brought with them the cultural treasures of their people. Representatives of different nations in the new place contributed to the formation of the American people. In the same process, American children's literature was gradually formed. True, this was a long-lasting creative process, and it had a number of drawbacks and advantages. This is primarily a feature of

confusion in children's literature. The history of American children's literature is based on the folklore of indigenous Indian tribes and the oral tradition of Dutch, Spanish, French, English, and Irish immigrants from Europe, as well as examples of children's literature available in the written literature of these peoples. But in the early days of U.S. children's literature, the simple, heartfelt expression of children's literature, some of the educational features of morality, science, and the humanities, came mixed with adult literature. For example, in John Smith's *The True Statement of Hospitality in Virginia* (1608), the heroism of John Smith and Princess Pocahontas evoked a sense of romanticism, heroism, and a hunger for risk in the hearts of adults as well as children. [1]. The way of life, power, heroism, mythical insights and views of the Hindus, which were not so familiar to the British, ensured that the events surrounding Pokahontas and his tribesmen were interesting and rich in adventure. The simplicity of the language of this work, as well as the closeness of the events in it to the existing oral traditions, aroused great interest among children.

Secondly, the representatives of each nation try to preserve their national values, it has been difficult to accept other artistic values. This is one of the reasons why the attention to children's literature is so weak.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Benjamin Franklin's first book, *The Diaries of Richard the Teenager*, has a special place in American teen literature. Although this work is on a historical theme, it can be said that the active use of folk proverbs, sayings, narrations in the language of adolescence helped to determine the direction of development of children's prose. [2]. It is true that the author wrote the work for adults, but the fact that the narrator of the work - Richard is a minor, his assessment of changes in real life from his own point of view, saves the author from many troubles. The fact that the work has been published for twenty-five years in a row proves that the demand for the work is high. However, because the amount of U.S. children's prose was relatively small, children also turned to works by British writers. One of them is the English author John Newbury's "History of a Little

Pair of Shoes” the first novel written for children ( John Newbery.“The History of Little Goody Two Shoes, 1765). It is true that Newbury's works also strictly adhered to moral norms, but in them the childish heart, their whims, were described. But still didactics took the lead. However, from the present point of view, this work of Newbury has a rough language, so much art, so much logic.

We are not here denying the importance of didactics in child rearing. But the work of art must form the heart, soul, and intellect of the reader. Didactics, on the other hand, teaches that this can be achieved through knowledge and strict adherence to the rules of etiquette. In fiction, on the other hand, the child has to be surrounded by different events and draw appropriate conclusions from them. In this sense, literature is a school of life.

In addition, the influence of works on various religious themes in the emerging American society was also strong, led by the idea of educating people in the spirit of subordination to the church, restricting individual freedom. The connection between the events that took place during the synthesis of different cultural strata with theology was predominant. Take, for example, Mary Rolandson's *The Story of Captivity and Escape*. It tells the story of the author and his three children captured by the Indians during the Great War against the Indians, their sufferings and hardships in a total of eighty-two days of captivity, and finally their purchase for a certain amount of money. [3]. In it, the author quotes many passages from the Christian holy book as he writes about his experiences. For example, Israel tries to substantiate events such as the liberation of children from Egyptian slavery in the womb of a whale, the enslavement to sin and suffering when the human heart is filled with evil. It is written that Mary thus saved her children from hardship and starvation. The style of the work is simple, the accuracy of the events and place names, based on a real event, is considered an achievement of the work. But artistically and aesthetically it is written quite loosely.

Additionally, Herman Melville (*Herman Melville: Bartleby, The Scrivener, Moby Dick, or the Whale* (1851), Typee) is also known for his teenage

adventures in the mid-19th century. [4]. His novel, *Moby Dick or the White Whale*, is large in size and tells the story of the courage of an old captain whaling at sea. The novel is interesting for children and teenagers with its rare events, necessary details, tools and equipment, experience in this field, full of knowledge about the profession of whaling.

In the 19th century, children's writers such as Thomas Mein Reed and Fenimore Cooper, authors of adventure novels, were also well known. For example, in Mein Reed's *The Child of the Wolf* [5], Fenimore Cooper's *Fighting the Wild: Texas Stories*, and *Lotsman* [6], the worldview of children and adolescents is closely related to adventure novels in English literature.

During this period, interest in adventure works in American children's literature increased dramatically. That's why Daniel Defoe's "The Adventures of Robinzo Cruise", Jonathan Swift's "The Adventures of Gulliver", Charles Perrault's "The Red Riding Hood", Hans Anderson, and the Brothers Grimm were all popular in the United States. Their adventure, new place, desire to see new people had a positive effect on children as well as adults, the struggle between good and evil in fairy tales, the victory of good contributed to the formation of a sense of vitality, social justice in the child's heart. Although U.S. literature does not have a long history compared to English, Russian, French, Indian, or Chinese literature, the world has made a worthy contribution to children's literature. "In a conservative American society, the subject of children's literature is not very diverse," he said. It describes the daily life of a long-time humble Christian, the protagonist being rewarded for his respect for elders, diligence, and harmonious morals "[7.152]. So, if we believe the opinion of scholars, the American children's literature would have been led by a religious-didactic spirit from its inception to the mid-nineteenth century. A similar situation can be found in Uzbek children's literature. Only here was the influence of sources based on Islamic values strong. In the United States, too, children's literature is reported to be in a religious, mythical state.

This process continued until the middle of the nineteenth century. Later, Mark Twain's books introduced a "new system of values" specific to children in literature [7.151]. The author had his own personal views and interests on child rearing, the principles of children's prose. According to the educators of that time, "difficult" children began to describe the world through their eyes. In this way, the values in the society contributed to the reconsideration of the directions in the upbringing of children. True, the children created by Mark Twain may walk the school in clean, neat clothes and not get excellent grades. But such qualities as zeal, perseverance, diligence, quick resolution of many life problems did not leave people indifferent.

It should be noted that the image of the child, the process of formation of the child as a person, from the earliest period of Mark Twain's work, to the end of his life, becomes a big core, a bullet line. For example, in such stories as "The Story of a Foolish Child", "The Story of a Good Child", "Memory", "The Legend of Sagenfeld in Germany", the protagonist is a child, in which the image of childhood is given in a unique way. [8].

"I was impressed," he said. But one day I jumped off the roof of the barn. Another time I entertained the elephant with a cigarette and left without expecting anyone to thank me. There was another incident in which I pretended to be distracted in my sleep and fell out of bed in front of my father - a peculiar finding. In all three cases, the results were not long in coming. Should they be remembered, because they belong only to me "[9.95].

In this passage from the story "Memory", the narrator's behavior, the child's relationship with his father, in the statement, the child skillfully tries to hide his cunning, cunning, joy. This shows that it is a leading feature of his character.

Mark Twain grew up as both a writer and a person and created mature works. "Nature's outward and inward feelings are still compatible; He loves those who retain the spirit of childhood even in adulthood "[10.181]. Because in the above story, it is said that the rebellious boy's stubborn father was influenced

by reading poetry and later became inclined to create and write poetry. So, it is possible to observe that the image of a gifted child, who is able to draw the necessary conclusions from funny, tumultuous, but good, impressive works, has been created. But the writer does not hide the fact that the child has talent and curiosity. Perhaps under the influence of a poem read by Longfellow, he climbs to the top and immediately weaves a new poem. It depicts the father listening intently to his son, in the process the father's face is first in a state of resolute vision, then begins to change with excitement, and finally breaks the glass by knocking on the window of a child who is eager to wait for his father's opinion. In this episode, which at first glance seems normal, it is important for the child to encourage the child to write a poem, to listen carefully to the poem written by his son. But the fact that these events are covered on the basis of the child's understanding and worldview, gives the story a special spirit, that is, uplifting, vital.

Well-known scholar B.A. Gilenson points out that Mark Twain is a true, Native American: "He grew up nourished from a young age by wild Western art culture: traditional oral history, the rougher speech of the common people, the unprocessed, specific humor of the frontiersman. To this can be added the style of press humor, the style of journalism. This is the core of his writing methodology, which, of course, has been refined, improved and enriched as he moves from work to work, from genre to genre "[11.229]. Indeed, as he moves from story to story, from story to novel, one can observe the maturity in Mark Twain's work, the sincerity, the adventure, the realistic image in the artistic perception of reality. For example, the events in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* are simple, yet the charming writer who captures the reader's attention in the narrator's speech shows that he has matured as he completes this work. In particular, the construction of the dialogue ensured a lively and convincing presentation of reality.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There was a slight noise behind her and she turned just in time to seize a small boy by the slack of his roundabout and arrest his flight.

‘There! I might ‘a’ thought of that closet. What you been doing in there?’

‘Nothing.’

‘Nothing! Look at your hands. And look at your mouth. What IS that truck?’

‘I don’t know, aunt.’

‘Well, I know. It’s jam — that’s what it is. Forty times I’ve said if you didn’t let that jam alone I’d skin you. Hand me that switch.’

The switch hovered in the air — the peril was desperate

— ‘My! Look behind you, aunt!’

The old lady whirled round, and snatched her skirts out of danger. The lad fled on the instant, scrambled up the high board-fence, and disappeared over it [12.4].

This passage features a conversation between Aunt Polly and her nephew Tom. It tells of Tom's jokes, his hunger for jam, and his misdeeds to escape punishment. It is through this conversation that the real situation is revealed, that the child is sly, cunning, zealous, impartial, and the old woman is simple and kind. The writer skillfully reveals the rhythmic-stylistic situation in the image of the conversation, in accordance with the content of the work, through questions and answers, without commenting on the speech and behavior of the characters.

In fact, Tom's brother Siddi (affectionately called Sid), a black boy named Jim, also lived in this apartment. Sometimes when Tom came home from school, they would help Jim, who lived as a slave in his house, with a wood mixer, telling him about his adventures at school. His brother, Sidney, is portrayed as an adult-minded, non-violent child who avoids bullying. With this, Mark Twain seems to be comparing two children in a way that reflects Tom’s dynamism, doing what he imagines. True, he doesn’t praise Sid or criticize Tom, but the image shows that the character of the two is two poles.



Since the novel is actually about the adventures of Tom Sawyer, the main focus is on his villains. For example, on a summer evening, a white-clad boy named Frant was walking down the street, and he came and stared at Tom. Will Tom feel like you want to beat him? he says. The boy also responds rudely without coming down, Tom also says that he will put his mind into it and the two kids in the middle get into a fight. Tom lays the child on the ground and rides on it, apologizing [12.10-11]. Such quarrels, swearing, rudeness may have been the norm for the children of that period. But when the two of them disperse, there is a sense of optimism, a sense of confidence, instead of remorse for what Tom did when he entered the house. In this way, the author gives a new artistic and aesthetic load to the work by describing his actions instead of educating the child in other books dedicated to children. Because depicting a child bullying was a novelty for that period. In this way, the student had to draw his own conclusions, express his attitude to reality.

In the novel, Tom always wants to go somewhere, he has to look for something he doesn't know well. Interestingly, the novel also begins with Aunt Polly looking for Tom. He calls twice, then wonders where the boy is missing, calls again, looks inside the tomato. Here, too, the child's character is given such lines as agility, restlessness, joy. It is here that the novel becomes a relatively new genre of art, widely used in American children's prose in the second half of the nineteenth century, but its artistic and aesthetic function is not so high. It is true that the artistic intent and idea of the writer are impressive events as a whole. But it is also clear from the example given that the means of artistic expression in language are relatively simple.

It should be noted that, "At the initial stage of the creative process, the object reflected from the external being, that is, the image of life, exists in the creative laboratory of the creator as a real space, an external space. This is where the artist's perception comes into play, and he loads the beauty, artistic and aesthetic loads on the reflected object and turns it into an image "[13.245]. From this, it also appears that urban life does not have a large artistic load as an image.

Right in Tom's account of his experiences, the place where he lives, more precisely, the family, demands that the town be brought into the work of art as an image. That's why the town of St. Petersburg, where Tom and his adoptive family live, is mentioned. It was much quieter, farther away from the big cities. But interesting things about Tom would happen often. Interestingly, Tom was very smart and a master, and every story could be to his advantage. Take the dental case, for example. In fact, every child his age has a tooth that falls out and is replaced by a new one. One day one of her upper teeth moved and hurt, and Polly still took a thread and tied one end to the leg of the bed and the other end to Tom's aching tooth, and pulled Tom's head back to pull out the aching tooth. This makes his teeth look like a toothpick. This is exactly what his peers like [14. 49-52]. They begin to look at Tom as a hero who fought the pirates and showed courage. So, everything that is unnatural and unusual for children is interesting, and in this way they use their interests and fantasies. As a result, one begins to think, to strive to solve the problem of life.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer has become a new work of art in world literature. He doesn't exhort children, but shows reality, what real life is like. Mark Twain consciously contrasted this work with the preconceived notion that it was the norm at the time, that looking at a child's behavior in schools and families was that he was a "good boy" and that he was a "bad boy". Because in fact the child will not be bad. Only the social environment leads to its formation in two different characters. That is why the writer portrays a cheerful, intelligent, life-loving teenager, Tom, as a child who enjoys the boring life of an American hunting town with his imaginary world and adventures "[15.27].

The protagonist of the third novel, Huckleberry Finn (also known as Geck), is mentioned in the first novel. In the introductory part of the work, the author cites him as a classmate of Tom Sawyer. In the fourth chapter of the novel, Huckleberry Finn is described as follows: All mothers hate Huckleberry Finn for being lazy, a bully, for not recognizing any law, and are disgusted when they see him. Their children were also proud of Geck, who wanted to be around

him, even though it was strictly forbidden to play with him, but regretted that they lacked the courage to be like him ”[16.53].

It is clear from the piece that the kids want to be as free and free as Gecko. While this is on the one hand related to a sense of personal masculinity in human nature, on the other hand it can also be recognized as a product of extreme rigidity in child rearing. American society in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially among those brought up in a traditional English environment with a religious spirit, required great courage to articulate these views of Mark Twain. Apparently, the writer said it was enough.

In addition, the writer focuses on the social status of children, and in his work also focuses on their material well-being and spiritual formation. Huckleberry, for example, also drew the attention of older students to the problem of orphans and neglected children by drawing a portrait of Finn.

“Huckleberry was always wearing a rag that had been left behind by someone, with torn skirts and holes, and his torn skirts were swaying in the wind. A large torn thing, the top of which was cut in the shape of a crescent, instead of a hat; the squirrel, if it is so called, would fall from its size to the ankle, the buttons being below the waist; his trousers hung on a ribbon over his shoulder, hanging like a large sack behind him; the rafters of his worn-out trousers would crawl on the ground, so Geck would pull them back up from his knees. Huckleberry would do what he wanted, no one would ask him where he went and what he did. If the weather was clear and dry, he would lie on the doorstep of a house, and on a rainy night in an empty barrel; he was relieved of the responsibility of going to school, church, and listening to lectures by unpleasant people. If he wanted to go fishing or swimming, he would sit by the river as long as he wanted, and no one forbade him to hit or walk around until midnight. From early spring to late autumn he walked barefoot, he did not have to wash or wear clean clothes, and his master was a farang to swear. In a word, this vulture had everything that was dear to life. In any case, this was the

opinion of the oppressed children of the exemplary families of St. Petersburg”[17].

## **CONCLUSION**

There are two important aspects to this passage. The first seems to be an attitude towards the dignity of the person in U.S. society at that time, specifically the neglected children, and the second seems to be the appreciation of individual freedom, personal freedom. But this freedom would bring tragedy to the child, such as humiliation and starvation in real life, spending the night on the street. Mark Twain urges the American people, who are focusing all their attention on production, on social issues in life as well as the need to allocate funds for the social protection of children.

Above is a portrait of Heckler Finn drawn by Mark Twain. Again, it should be noted that the portrait of Finn is depicted with the eyes of a child. It combines a child’s humorous image and at the same time a tragic life, giving the reader a deeper, brighter understanding of the cruelty of life. So, it can be said that Mark Twain has once again proved that he can bring a unique novelty to American children’s prose.

The work of art is created to assess life and the behavior of the protagonist, which is reflected in each image line. The protagonists have a real typical situation, a rarity of the situation. In this sense, Mark Twain is a writer who has made great strides in world children’s literature.

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