

Mark Twain's "Tall Tale State of Mind" in His Later Years

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Mark Twain came to produce more imaginative writings towards the end of his career such as "No.44, The Mysterious Stranger" and "Three Thousand Years Among the Microbes." Many scholars have recently shown their growing interest in these unfinished works, which the author himself was profoundly attached to,¹ and have discussed them within the genre of fantasy. As we closely examine them, however, we can discover in them tall-tale like characteristics. In the unique Satan figure that Twain created,² especially No.44, for instance, we can see what Carolyn S. Brown defines as "a tall tale state of mind."³ In the microbe story, Huck, the cholera germ, narrates his adventure story in a manner of a tall-tale teller. I assume, therefore, that Twain meant the stories to be tall tales. In this article, I am going to cast a light on the tall-tale like quality of the works, through which the author's "tall tale state of mind" is self-evident. I am further going to discuss Twain's intention of inviting us readers to his world of tall tales. This study is beneficial because it offers a new suggestion that Twain's "tall tale state of mind," which is generally considered peculiar to his pleasant early writings, actually remained until his later years. Accordingly, the viewpoint questions the established interpretation that the author was totally seized with "despair" during the last years of his life.⁴

Towards the end of his life as a writer, Twain created several different Satan characters and employed them as his mouthpiece in his writings.⁵ They vary from one another in characteristics, but they are all produced for the same purpose: that is, to destroy the accepted thought that men are the whole importance of this universe. Significantly, Twain more or less humanized them all. Among them, No.44 has more human qualities than any other Satan characters.

Twain's perspective on Satan is far different from the conventional view in Christendom that Satan is the greatest enemy of the Christians, who deserves no mercy at all. Twain does not regard Satan as the object of hatred, but of favor and compassion instead. As he creates a Satan

figure, therefore, he inspires a "heart" or feelings into it. In "Schoolhouse Hill," for example, he creates Forty-four, a son of Satan, and lets him reveal that the degradation of men is not due to his father's intentional evil, but to an unexpected "disaster" even to himself.⁶ According to Forty-four, interestingly, Satan thought that the forbidden fruit would merely reveal them "a knowledge of the difference between good and evil," and that was all (216). He never knew, however, that the fruit would cause them "the passionate and eager and hungry *disposition to DO evil!*" (216). Thus, it was a great "disaster" even to Satan himself, and it tortured his "heart" incredibly. The trouble was so unendurable that he had to "grieve and lament" (215). Through the depiction of Satan, we can see the author's peculiar idea that Satan is the existence of a badly tormented "heart," that is, the object of the deepest sympathy and familiarity.

Twain's unconventional view is a result of the great influence that he has received from his mother, a pious Presbyterian. In his autobiographical fragment,⁷ he refers to his reverence to her generosity especially when she prayed for Satan who, she believed, needed it most for repentance. We are not sure whether the fact is exaggerated or not. However, we at least can see her unusual willingness to guide Satan or a satanic soul, though she was a Presbyterian whose general belief was that Satan was untouchably evil. Obviously, she never doubted that Satan had a "heart," which could cause pangs of conscience and motivate his repentance. Her extraordinary large-heartedness had impressed young Clemens and remained in him until he expressed it in his later years. He came to favor such tolerance for Satan and let his favorable character express it, a "limitlessly good-hearted" man, Mr. Hotchkiss in "Schoolhouse Hill": "We have been misinformed about devils. There's a great deal of ignorant prejudice around, concerning them" (219). His words seem to be a reflection of the author's, because Mr. Hotchkiss overlaps with Twain in that he shows his interest in various religions, continuously seeking after the truth (190). In addition, Twain's affinity with Satan is signified by the fact that his family used to have numerous pet cats, and he named one of them "Satan" and her kitten "Sin" (*Autobiography* 209). The anecdote shows Twain's special interest and affinity for Satan.

In search for his own Satan figure, Twain seems to have given various features to the characters experimentally. As a result, each Satan possesses different characteristics from the others in detail. Compared with Forty-four in "Schoolhouse Hill," for instance, No.44, the mysterious youth, seems to be more humanized where his feelings and expressions are concerned, as his own remarks

reveal: "I am friendless,...and am so---so hungry!" (235). No.44 wears the "most forlorn look," feeling friendless (235). When August comes to make friends with him, however, he tightly grasps the hand of his only friend by both hands and "beame[s] his gladness from his eyes" (247). Then he heartily thanks him over and over again, showing his extreme happiness now to be free from "friendless[ness]." August finds the mood of No.44 "so pathetic," as the youth penetrates his hesitation to come back to see him again (249).

We can see another human element in No.44, that is, loneliness. This feeling is what bothers men most and sometimes tortures them so that they even have to wish to die. Huck Finn, for example, often feels "so lonesome [he] most wished [he] was dead" when he is alone in his room at Widow Douglas' after everybody else goes to bed.⁸ As I have already mentioned, however, the detailed features vary, depending on each Satan. Thus, what one possesses does not necessarily apply to the others. While No.44 often looks feelingful, for instance, Forty-four does not. The latter merely shows "a flash of temper," but it disappears in a moment (189).

Another element that makes No.44 appear more human is the fact that he experiences hunger. This marks a fine contrast with Forty-four, who never gets hungry or thirsty. Certainly, we somehow perceive Twain's humanization of Forty-four in that he "smoke[s] and sip[s] in peace, and quiet, and manifest contentment," though not as much as No.44 (210). Interestingly, No.44 cares about a human thing such as sociability. As he first recommends a drink to August, but not to himself, he finds it "unsociable," changes his mind, and drinks with the guest (248). These episodes illustrate the human-like nature that the author gives No.44 besides his supernatural powers. In the mysterious youth, Twain inspires various characteristics, which are all harmoniously integrated.

Twain's Satan characters are mostly delightful enough to sweep away unpleasant feelings of the other characters and fill them with incredible pleasantness instead. In the case of Mr. Hotchkiss, for instance, his fear is gone, but relief and contentment take its place, once Forty-four reaches out and gently touches his trembling hand. No.44 is the most remarkable example. Wherever he goes, he causes pleasantness, and it makes his friend, August, realize that he is coming. He then experiences a "mysterious soul-refreshment": "The very sight of him [i]s enough to drive away [his] terrors and despairs and make [him] forget [his] deplorable situation" (356). Not only his sight, but also his voice is soul-soothing, for it is "music" to the ears of August (312).

Twain seems to highly appreciate music or something musical as what raises men's hearts and souls. For instance, August is deeply impressed by "the adorable sounds" of a church organ, which he finds "healing [their] hearts, soothing [their] griefs, steeping [them] deeper and deeper in its unutterable peace" (271). It is as if the touching sounds wake up a "[thirst] for the fructifying dew of truth" deep down in their "souls," which they have been unaware of themselves (271). The quest for the "truth" is now satisfied with "all worldly thoughts, all ungentle thoughts...gone" from their hearts (271). Twain particularly shows his own attachment to music through Huck Finn. Huck comments: "Music *is* a good thing; and after all [the] soul-butter and hogwash, I never see it freshen up things so, and sound so honest and bully" (*Huck Finn* 213). This proves Twain's appreciation of the soul-soothing nature of music. This may urge him to create the satisfactory hero, No.44, whose words and laughter are delightfully musical.

In this way, each of Twain's Satan figure has its own personality. In fact, however, there seems to be other outstandingly common characteristics they share, that is, their perspectives in regard to the human race. In particular, they coincide in their persistent interests in men. According to them, this is what makes them to come to the earth. Although Twain has inspired some human nature into them, as previously discussed, they are still cryptically veiled to the humans. Therefore, they are the mysterious strangers in the human world. From their point of view as "social misfit[s]" (Brown 121), they expose what they find queer about the human race; their stance is "skeptical," "irreverent" (Brown 90) and "comic[ly] defian[t]" (Brown 89).

The eyes of the Satan figures are turned towards the established belief of the human race. They see through its contradiction and sharply point it out in their remarks. For instance, as represented by August, who is "trained"⁹ to be a "good" Catholic (222), the human race claims to believe in "the eternal bliss of heaven" (334). Being "skeptical," however, No.44 never fails to pierce man's fear against death: "At bottom,...he is far from being certain about heaven" (334). This indication recalls that of Satan's in "Letters from the Earth," which bitterly reveals how "insane" the human race's sense of value is.¹⁰ According to him, man "has invented a heaven, out of his own head, all by itself" (*Bible* 224), and yet his heaven has "not a single thing he likes" (*Bible* 227). Satan often questions the heaven of the race in which "they think they think they are going to be happy" (*Bible* 226). For example, the race never doubts that in heaven it will be praising God all the time, with continuous praying, singing, and playing of the instruments. Also, it believes that

people will respect each other beyond races and denominations when they enter their heaven. The actuality on the earth, however, is totally opposite. Although Satan's remarks certainly sound more bitter than No.44's, they more or less correspond to No.44's that are expressed more mildly.

Also, No.44 is "irreverent" about man's belief that he is the image of God, the Creator, and that He will be flattered by his praise and admiration. As if to ruin the firmly established thought, however, No.44 speaks of the infinite triviality of the human race, comparing the race to "the rushlight" and his own kind to "the sun": "the sun doesn't care for the rushlight's reverence. Put it away" (319). This "irreverent" indication is likely to reflect his total indifference and bitterness. Nonetheless, we also should not miss the remarks he makes "out of [his] heart": "I have always felt more sorry for [the race] than ashamed of it" (320). Here, we can find No.44 quite sympathetic with the human beings. He further reveals that he has a strong "interest" in the human beings and that he thinks the race is "amusing" (320). For this reason, No.44's talk sounds rather "comic[ly] defian[t]" than severe.

These characteristics of No.44 are what Brown considers as "a tall tale state of mind." This is prominently created in "the class of traveling Americans" as a result of their experiences of a series of adventures (Brown 90). They certainly find in the journeys various encounters with things of wonders, which urge them to spin a yarn that is "profoundly entertaining."¹¹ The "tall tale state of mind," a product of the traveling experiences, can be discovered in No.44, who travels around the infinite universe. As he reveals to August himself, he is surprisingly "[August's] dream, creature of [his] imagination" (404): that is, a product of his "Dream-Self" (315). Significantly, the nature of a "Dream-Self" greatly corresponds to that of a "traveling Americans" Brown refers to: "all [Dream-Self] cares for is to travel, talk, and see wonderful things and have a good time" (378).

What most differentiates "Dream-Selves" from "traveling Americans" is, however, that "Dream-Selves" are never enslaved by any limitation or restriction. The traveling "Dream Selves," therefore can experience "wonderful things" beyond time and space. For instance, they "visit hell, [they] roam in heaven, [their] playgrounds are the constellations and the Milky Way" (370). These experiences of "wonderful things" form an extended "tall tale state of mind" in a "Dream-Self." No.44, therefore, is a personification of "a tall tale state of mind" or an existence in which the frame of mind is fully realized. In fact, he is a yarn spinner who is always relentless and changing his subject so frequently that August has to always give up. Since he often jumps back and forth,

August sometimes gets irritated with his manner. Yet since his "talk" is out of his cosmic perspective, August finds his stories "pleasing, indeed captivating" (330). Once No.44 begins telling a story, he is "talking all the while...pleasantly, fascinatingly, winningly" (329). When he talks or discusses with August, he tells his friend to "move up to the fire" (314). As the two draw themselves to the fire, it "blaze[s] up...as if in a voluntary welcome" of them (314). This recalls "a very sociable camp-fire" (*Roughing It* 15) for dreaded travelers or lone miners in the far West, around which they would tell bizarre stories that sound "profoundly entertaining."

Another similarity between "Dream-Selves" and "traveling Americans" is their imaginations. For instance, the "traveling Americans" can create a strikingly unconventional world in their narratives with their "energetic imagination" (Brown 90). It shakes the established arrogant perspective of the listeners and uncovers their ignorance and absurdity. In the world of a tall tale, the conventional thought of the audience is "vandalize[d]" (Brown 89), which is based on their self-importance. Equally, or even in a larger way, a "Dream-Self" causes the same effect due to its "measureless imagination" (316). Whatever a "Dream-Self" imagines, it is what happens beyond a "dull Mortal Mind's reach" (378), that is, the world of a "Waking-Self" (342). It is understandable, therefore, that Twain came to be totally enchanted in the dream land where he could fully realize his "tall tale state of mind" more than anywhere else in this life.

The previous analysis proves that Twain produced "No. 44, The Mysterious Stranger" with his extended "tall tale state of mind." The frame of mind is also self-evident in one of his contemporary writings, "Three Thousand Years Among the Microbes." The burlesque begins full of bizarreness and humor, when the protagonist happens to be transformed under a false experiment of a magician, not into a bird as initially intended, but into a harmful cholera germ in the body of a drunkard. The striking idea comes from the author's satirical view on man, who believes that he is under a special care and treatment of God. He never notices his own injuriousness not only to the other creatures but also to his own race due to the self-centered belief. The cholera germ, called Huck, narrates his reminiscences of the microbe world. Just as Huck Finn tells all his adventure along the Mississippi Valley, microbe Huck tells what he encounters, drifting down the vast veins in the drunkard's body.

In the second preface, Twain indicates that he has translated Huck's narrative from germ language into English. He has taken great pains in the work due to the teller's style which is "loose

and wandering and garrulous and self-contented beyond anything [he] ha[s] ever encountered before, and his grammar [that] breaks the heart."¹² Huck's manner of story-telling is exactly that of a tall-tale teller in his "shirt-sleeves and overalls" in a mining district (*Devil's Race-Track* 162). Although the translator once tried to reform the style and construction into an "elegant" fashion of a college lecturer, he eventually has to put them back to their original way, which he finds much more "pleasant," "satisfactory," warm, and sympathetic (*Devil's Race-Track* 162).

Huck's narrative digresses, wanders around, and ends nowhere, just like that of the tireless talkers in the mining camps, represented by Ben Coon, a bartender in Angel's Camp. He is like Simon Wheeler in "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog," with which Twain gained fame as a humorous writer in American literary circles. Twain observed the secret of the story-telling during his sojourn in the West, which he later came to lecture on in his essay, "How to Tell a Story": "The humorous story may be spun out to great length, and may wander around as much as it pleases, and arrive nowhere in particular."¹³

Certainly, Huck endlessly tells what he has experienced in the microscopic world, from a microbe's point of view, not of a man. Surprisingly, he discovers in a drop of his own blood through a microscope that there further exists a smaller world of microbes, the Swinks. This is one of the "bare facts" that he refers to in the first preface.¹⁴ In fact, the Swinks produce great works, without which rotten things will soon accumulate on the earth and, as a result, disturb the occupations of all the living things. Huck, therefore, realizes even in the trivial existences the boundless potential power. It is a great eye-opening to Huck, who has been blind to the "fact."

Huck's appreciation towards the great work of the Swinks also implies that each world can never exist without depending on the smaller worlds that exist in it. He further observes that there exist smaller worlds of microbes, which hints the possibility that Huck's present world may be placed under numerous macro worlds. Huck's bizarre discovery reveals to us readers that the whole boundless universe may consist of numerous worlds so that our present world may not necessarily be the whole thing but a mere part of it. Huck's recognition of his own nothingness compared to the infinite universe also causes us to wonder whether our belief in our own importance in the vast universe is a mere delusion.

Huck comes to feel the "fact" more and more real, as his sense of time of the human world gradually fades out. His spiritual awakening is now certain.

Since ever so long ago, microbe time has been *real* to me, and human time a dream — the one present and vivid, the other far away and dim, very dim, wavering, spectral, the substantiality all gone out of it. (*Devil's Race-Track* 177)

His own remarks confirm that he was only dreaming in the human world and totally blind to the "fact" that he is a drop of the infinite microcosm.

Huck's recognition of the "fact" relies on Twain's outlook on the universe in his last years. Certainly, he conceived a strong desire to share the view with his readers. He, therefore, creates the world of a tall tale in the striking way and invites the readers to see the "fact" through Huck's point of view. Now Huck's spiritual awakening is not only of his own but also of the readers'. The more Huck's narrative develops, the more we come to share the same dimension. As a consequence, we go deeper into the tall-tale world created by Huck, or rather by Twain. In this way, Twain invites the readers not as guests but as "insider[s]" (Brown 102).

Obviously, Twain produced "No.44, The Mysterious Stranger" for the same purpose. In his letter to Howells, he wrote:

It [= "No.44, The Mysterious Stranger"] is under way, now, & it *is* a luxury! an intellectual drunk. Twice I didn't start it right; & got pretty far in, both times, before I found it out. But I am sure it is started right this time. It is in <story> tale-form. I believe I can make it tell what I think of Man, & how he is constructed, & what a shabby poor ridiculous thing he is, & how mistaken he is in his estimate of his character & powers & qualities & his place among the animals. So far, I think I am succeeding."¹⁵

This passage shows Twain's special enthusiasm about the work despite the several failures and his joy of the success in speaking right out of his heart: that is to say, "what a shabby poor ridiculous thing" a man is, and "how mistaken he is in his estimate" of himself that he deserves special respect from all the other creatures and all the privileges on earth.

Through Satan in the "Letters from the Earth," Twain insists that such an "estimate" is nothing but an illusion; that is, what men have "invented... out of their own head" as they pleased (*Bible* 224). In fact, they are blind to the "fact" that their history is smeared with their conflicts and hatred towards their own race. Namely, they are enslaved by their own self-importance.¹⁶ Twain

finds it unendurable that "jarrings and enmities" (271) are always extant in this world at any time of history, just as No.44 shows to August. Twain was deeply sympathetic not only with victims in the condition but also with those whose spirits were tormented as the result of their own "jarrings and enmities." Twain desired to liberate the human race that was caught in its own trap, by disenchanting it from its self-centered illusion.

He knew well, however, that "[his] say" would sound unreal, heresy, and even satanic to the readers. He, therefore, ventured to create No.44 as a Satan figure, despite his angelic qualities, and employed him as his mouthpiece to let him have "[his] say." The "say" of the author was not only severe, however, for he was a human being himself and "sorry" for his race rather than "ashamed" of it, just as No.44 is for August (320).

Out of this compassion, Twain tried to free his race from the illusion. For this purpose, he employed No.44 and lets him "vandalize" August, a good "trained" Catholic who Twain meant to be a representative of the race. August, now being his "Dream-Self," travels in the universe with No.44 beyond time and space. No doubt, he comes to learn how "infinitely trivial" (319) he is by experiencing the spacious cosmos, while microbe Huck is struck by the "fact" in the infinite microcosm. Since No.44 is an enlarged "tall tale state of mind," what August experiences is a tall-tale world. Perhaps, he is gradually waking to the "fact," but not thoroughly, due to the restriction of his "dull Mortal Mind." At last, therefore, No.44 has to disenchant him in the most "electrical" way without a limitation of any sort (404). He now invites August to the most striking world. He reveals:

"Life itself is only a vision, a dream" (404).

"You are but a Thought---a vagrant Thought, a useless Thought, a homeless Thought, wandering forlorn among the empty eternities!" (405).

No.44 reveals to August his infinite triviality in the most conspicuous way to thoroughly "vandalize" his self-importance which he has been blind to himself. No.44 now frankly tells August that he does not have a substance such as body, blood, and bone, but is a mere "Thought" — "a Thought" not to invent a pleasant "vision" or "dream" but to invent a "hideous dream" (*Connecticut Yankee* 447) of the "jarrings and enmities."

Surprisingly, however, the revelation does not sound so pathetic. Instead it causes in the hearer "a gush of thankfulness" and even "the great hope" (404) because he now can "dream other dreams, and better" with his "hideous dream" now "vandalize[d]." He now recognizes himself floating forlorn among "the empty eternities." The "eternities" have no beginning and end beyond any restriction of time and space. Since "the empty eternities" enable "a *Thought*" to reproduce a new life, that is, a "better" "dream," they can be considered as "life without end."¹⁷ If a man casts away his conceit and dissolves into the eternal life, he can deviate from the earthly sense of time and space. At the same time, he can be free from the earthly "vision" of the continuous conflicts and hatred. Now No. 44 is departing because his mission is completed. He has "revealed" August to himself and "set [him] free" (404). The mysterious youth now vanishes and leaves him "appalled; for [he] knew, and realized, that all he had said was true" (405).

In this way, Twain's "tall tale state of mind" remained or turned out to be even more brilliant in his later years. It produced several tall tales, through which Twain intended to "vandalize" our conventional "vision" based on self-assertion. As microbe Huck and August open their eyes to "the fact" that they are nothing in the infinite universe, accordingly, we the readers share the same awakening as listening "insiders" of the tall stories. We are also deeply enchanted by the delightfulness of humanized Satan, No.44, and Huck's bizarre and humorous experiences of the microscopic world. Therefore, we must not overlook the pleasant characteristics, which also form later Mark Twain, despite the general perspective that his later life casts its "pessimistic" shadow.

Notes

1. Twain expressed in his letter to W.D. Howells his special attachment to "No.44, The Mysterious Stranger": "It is under way, now, & it is a luxury! an intellectual drunk" (*Mark Twain-Howells Letters II: The Correspondence of Samuel L. Clemens & William D. Howells 1869-1910*, ed. Henry Nash Smith and William M. Gibson, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960 p.698). Also, he reported to F.A. Duneka of Harper & Brothers on his writing "Three Thousand Years Among the Microbes": "I am deep in a new book which I enjoy more than I have enjoyed any other for twenty years and I hope it will take me the entire summer to write it" (*Mark Twain's Which Was The Dream? And Other Symbolic Writings of the Later Years*, ed. John S. Tuckey, Berkeley: U of California P, 1968 p.430).

- 2.The figure of Satan that Twain created was far different from conventional Satan. He often conveyed pleasant and even angelic characteristics with his Satan characters.
- 3.Carolyn S. Brown, *The Tall Tale in American Folklore and Literature* (Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1989) 90.
- 4.For more explanation of the accepted perspective, see *Mark Twain's Last Years As a Writer* by William R. Macnaughton (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1979), pages 3-4.
- 5.The Satan figures I treat in this article are Forty-four and his father, Satan, in "Schoolhouse Hill," No.44 in "No.44, The Mysterious Stranger," and Satan in "Letters from the Earth."
6. Mark Twain, *Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts*, ed.William M. Gibson (Berkeley: U of California P, 1969) 215. Hereafter the further references to this text are given by the page numbers.
- 7.Mark Twain, *The Autobiography of Mark Twain*, ed.Charles Neider (New York: Harper Perennial, 1990) 26-27.
- 8.Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1996) 4.
- 9.In his writings, Twain often deals with the negative effects of "training" that control the human mind. In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), for instance, Twain describes how man's mind gets distorted through his lifelong everyday familiarity with "training" and that he blindly comes to regard what is harmful to him as something "good" and noble.
- 10.Mark Twain, "Letters from the Earth" in *The Bible According to Mark Twain*, ed. Howard G. Baetzhold and Joseph B. McCullough (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996) 221.
- 11.Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1995) 15.
- 12.Mark Twain, "Three Thousand Years Among the Microbes" in *The Devil's Race-Track: Mark Twain's Great Dark Writings*, ed.John S. Tuckey (Berkeley: U of California P, 1980) 162.
- 13.Mark Twain, *Mark Twain's How To Tell a Story and Other Essays*, ed. Shelly Fisher Fishkin (New York: Oxford UP, 1996) 3.
- 14.In the first preface, Twain as the translator insists as follows: "ALTHOUGH THIS WORK is a History, I believe it to be true. There is internal evidence in every page of it that its Author was conscientiously trying to state bare facts..." (*Devil's Race-Track* 161). The "Author," trying to state "bare facts," recalls Ben Coon, a tall-tale teller, who told the jumping frog story also as mere "facts": "In his mouth this episode was merely history — history and statistics; and the gravest sort of history, too; he was entirely serious, for he was dealing with what to him were austere facts, and they interested him solely because they were facts..." (*Early Tales & Sketches vol.2 1864-1865*, Berkeley: U of California P, 1981 p.264).
- 15.*Mark Twain's-Howells Letters II: The Correspondence of Samuel L. Clemens & William D.*

Howells 1869-1910, ed. Henry Nash Smith and William Gibson (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1960) 698-699.

16. Hank Morgan in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1983) is a prominent example of those whose spirits suffer as the effect of their own self-centeredness. He transmigrates from the nineteenth-century Connecticut to the sixth-century England. His initial intention is to civilize the nation with the knowledge and the technology of his own time and turn it into a republic. As the ambition of conquering the country gradually swells in him, however, the technology is used not only for the amenities of the people but more for producing weapons to fight against the nation with. The result is a war, an incredible massacre. At first, he gets exultant in his victory. As the tragic sight spreads before him, however, he can no longer endure and has to reach out for one of his enemies, though he gets stabbed to death in return. Back in the nineteenth century, Hank reveals in a dreamy condition his genuine feelings. His suffering spirit cries out: "[D]eath is nothing, let it come, but not with those dreams, not with the torture of those hideous dreams—I cannot endure that again..." (447). Hank is now tortured by the "hideous dreams," that is, the unendurable sight of the massacre, which originates in his lust for the conquest.
17. Heinz Morioka & Miyoko Sasaki, *Rakugo: The Popular Narrative Art of Japan* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: the Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard U & Harvard UP, 1990) 53. "The empty eternities" that Twain refers to remind me of "*Jugemu*," a traditional term for the eternal life from Sutra.

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