

“A Journey on the River: The Manifestation of Cicero’s Model
of Friendship in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn”

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Friendship is a most vital aspect of human life, providing joy, support, challenge, love, and guidance, and prompting personal growth and maturation. Friends can take on each other's burdens and amplify each other's triumphs. Such relationships are fundamentally important to all people because the way we relate to those around us dictates the way we understand ourselves and our role in society. The significance of friendship is prominent in the works of some of the most influential Classical authors; Cicero in particular draws heavily on Aristotle to formulate his dialogue De Amicitia, a text which argues for an intrinsic link between virtue and friendship. In Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, the author actualizes a version of the virtuous friendship presented by Cicero in the friendship between Huckleberry Finn and Jim the slave. Both authors lived in times of great political and social upheaval and each responded to the turmoil in a similar way. Cicero presents an idealistic form of friendship because it contrasts with the way his peers in the Roman Republic were breaking faith with each other for the sake of power and influence. Twain also presents an idealistic model of friendship which requires his main characters to put their relationship before their conformity to conventional law because the law does not regard them as equal. This paper examines Cicero's model of friendship and how it is reflected in Mark Twain's novel. We will begin with a discussion of four major terms in Cicero's De Amicitia and identify their presence in Twain's work. We will then discuss other important aspects of Cicero's concept of friendship and the way they appear in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Cicero begins his dialogue with the stipulation that friendship can only exist between two good men, an idea which is not unique to his writing; it dates back to Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics, in which Aristotle outlines three kinds of friendship. The first kind of friendship is

structured as a give-and-take relationship, based on the exchange of favors; this is a friendship of utility. The second is a mutual enjoyment of the other party's humor, looks, or attitude, or essentially a friendship for the sake of pleasure and satisfaction. These two more selfish kinds of friendship are not built to last due to the constantly changing nature of man; because the love for the other is not based on the person himself, once the particular aspect of the person which gives advantage to the other disappears, so too will the friendship. The third relationship is that which can only exist between virtuous men, which incidentally contains the benefits of both other kinds of friendship because each friend wishes the best for the other due to the love he has for his friend (N.E., 1156a). Cicero clearly draws on this third kind of friendship as the foundation for his dialogue, while including attributes of the other two as added benefits of such a relationship.

Going forward, we must consider whether there is a universal standard we can determine for friendship, or if it is dependent on the time in which a person lives. It seems that we must constantly be developing and evolving our understanding of our relationships with others in order to live and function in the particular society in which we exist. Since historical context is essential for the subtle understanding of the theoretical views and terms used by the authors, we will have a brief overview of our authors' backgrounds.

We do not know much about Aristotle's life; during the time in which he composed most of his writings he was living in Athens, and had never been exposed to a political turmoil comparable to that in the Roman Republic during Cicero's life, or that of the 1800s in the United States.¹ We know much more about Cicero, who started his De Amicitia sometime in 45 BC. At

¹ Aristotle's father was the personal physician (technically a second-class citizen, blue-collar) to the Macedonian king. He grew up most likely in the Macedonian court, and later was appointed by Philip of Macedon (the conqueror of Greece) as a tutor. During this time in Macedon, he gave lessons to three future kings; this means that he spent most of his time around monarchs and had only theoretical

that point, Caesar is at the peak of his power, having defeated the last Pompeian forces and appointed his nephew Gaius Octavianus as his heir. The civil war between him and Pompey has raged on for years, and partisanship-sparked violence is by now a feature of life for Romans. A new civil war is brewing too, since Mark Antony, Caesar's lieutenant, is not happy with Caesar's choice of heir. A prominent Roman lawyer and politician, Cicero had chosen the side of Pompey during the civil war but never really severed ties with Caesar, who pardoned him in 48 BC. Cicero's view was that the war was no more about the *res publica*², and that both parties were looking to profit from it. In a letter to a close friend, he outlines his strategy for life under Caesar:

I advise you to do what I am advising myself – avoid being seen even if we can't avoid being talked about. If our voices are no longer heard in the Senate and in the Forum, let us follow the example of ancient sages and serve our country through writings on questions of ethics and constitutional law (Cicero, Letters to Friends, 9.2).

Cicero saw that his fellow politicians' focus was not on the *res publica* and the common good, but on personal gain. It is very likely that he wrote De Amicitia with an ideal in mind that he does not see actualized in his community: good will and unity between people for the sake of the

knowledge of Athenian democracy. When he leaves this position, Athens becomes his permanent residence. Before this, he has no experience living under democratic rule. The Athenians view him with suspicion because of his connections to the Macedonian monarchs (Athens had just been conquered by Philip, the father of Alexander the Great) and in time accuse him of impiety; saying that he did not want the Athenians to commit a crime against philosophy twice (clearly relating himself to Socrates and referencing Socrates' execution), Aristotle escapes. We know notoriously little about Aristotle beyond his works, his complex relationship with Athens, and the position of his father in the Macedonian court (this information is from lectures and general knowledge).

² In this text, the term *res publica* will replace the "state." The term "state" is misleading because it can refer to the current government, which may be corrupt. Cicero's intended idea is that of the commonwealth, an ideal community that values the good of the whole.

success of the *res publica*. Cicero writes in a more theoretical manner than Mark Twain because of the rarity of the relationship he describes.

Like Cicero, Twain too writes about an ideal: friendship and care crossing race lines during the early 1800s in the United States. Instead of developing it theoretically, however, he does so through the fictional account of a flawed pair's flight and adventures. Mark Twain started writing The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in 1876, the year when Republican presidential candidate Hayes eked out a victory by striking a compromise with the southern Democrats: the federal army would withdraw from the South. The deal left freedmen to the white conservative Democrats, who, by degrees, regained power in state governments. Although the K.K.K. had been shut down in 1870, the southern Democrats made it their mission to prevent freedmen from voting and did their best to encourage hatred and racism against Black folks. All around the country, the emancipation of slaves was being counteracted by the relentless racism of pro-slavery white Americans, and the very poor whites felt threatened by the constitutional amendments that seemed to give rights to freedmen, thinking that those rights took away their own. Twain alludes to this mindset through the character of Pap, Huck's fiercely racist father who announces that he will not vote anymore because his state allowed a freedman to vote. When The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was published, it was perceived as a critique of racism and slavery through the portrayal of a runaway slave and a young white boy as friends and allies in the Antebellum South.

Cicero's political environment was marked by the dissolution of social and personal bonds. Those who were supposed to be *virī boni*³ did not act so, engaging instead in political schemes for personal gain. Cicero as a *homo novus* lacked the conventional pedigree of a *vir bonus*, which most likely influenced Cicero's standard for those capable of the type of friendship he envisions: "This, however, I do feel first of all – that friendship cannot exist except among good men [*virī boni*]" (D.A., 5.18). He had a dream of reforming the *res publica* through that ideal friendship between true *virī boni* in accord with the reformed *res publica* (see D.A., 12.40). So, what constitutes a *vir bonus*? Laelius, one of the characters in De Amicitia, provides a set of four criteria which, he argues, come from Nature herself:

Those who carry themselves, who live in this way, so as to demonstrate faith, trustworthiness, fairness, generosity, and there is in them no passion, desire, boldness, those who are great with respect to steadfastness, as those whom I named, let us consider that these men are worthy to be called good men as they have been considered, because they follow nature, the best leader to living well, as far as mortal men are able (D.A., 19.29-36).

These four terms – in Latin, *fides*, *integritas*, *aequitas*, and *liberalitas*, in English, faith, trustworthiness, level-headedness, and kindness – redefine the conventional notion of *vir bonus*, the idealized and morally upstanding citizen of old to whose values Cicero wants his community to return.

³*Virī boni* is a Roman phrase similar to the Greek καλοκάγαθος, which refers to the ideal noble personality: upstanding, trustworthy, socially responsible. A comparable English term would be the "perfect gentleman."

Fides, the most common term of the four, appears previously to Cicero's writing most often as a reference to the faith or trust in either humans or gods. This term is popular in other contemporary authors as well: in his De Bello Gallico, for instance, Caesar applies *fides* to the kind of relationships of vital importance in military context and the personal interactions in such context. In his other works, Cicero uses the term in a similar way, while also calling attention to the importance of *fides* to the *res publica*. Here is an excerpt from his letter to a close friend, Brutus⁴:

And I am not speaking now of those duties which alone, of course, can be positively demanded of every human being – good faith [*fides*], vigilance, patriotism (Cicero, Letters to Brutus, 2.1.2).

This is a clear example of Cicero's attempt to redefine the definition of *vir bonus* by general traits of humanity based on traditional Roman values. While *fides* is used in a few different ways, namely with regard to political figures, Roman military attitudes toward the Republic, and Cicero's idea of human duty, it is only combined with the other three chosen terms in Cicero's works in circumstances involving politics or the judgment of a politically significant person in court.

Huck and Jim display Cicero's characteristics *fides*, *integritas*, *aequitas*, and *liberalitas* as well, which shows that Mark Twain values the same human traits as Cicero. Upon their first meeting on the river, Huck is not worried in the slightest that Jim would turn him in as a runaway. Similarly, Jim trusts Huck's assurance that he won't expose Jim immediately and confesses that he has run away; information that could result in terrible punishment for Jim if

⁴ The very same Brutus who was a conspirator in the killing of Julius Caesar in 44 BC.

Huck were to break his word (53-55). In this situation, they clearly see and feel the attribute *fides* in each other because they both readily confide in the other and believe that the other will keep their information in confidence.

The two feel *fides* in each other as well on the occasions that Huck and Jim feel comfortable separating from each other and each trusts the other to return. This is one of the many times Huck defies social norms: he aligns himself with Jim in their journey to escape together. He solidifies his allegiance with Jim in his decision to put himself in danger of discovery by disguising himself and heading into a nearby town to get information. When Huck converses with a local woman and learns that people are searching for Jim, he could easily have avoided involvement in Jim's crime by leaving Jim behind because he is white and resourceful enough to find his way in this new place. Instead, he immediately runs back to their hiding place, creates a diversion, and rouses Jim with the words "Git up and hump yourself, Jim! There ain't a minute to lose. They're after us!" (H.F., 79). Huck's use of the word "us" instead of "you" links Jim and Huck together even though Jim is the one whose freedom is in danger⁵.

Integritas, which is occasionally linked with *fides* in Cicero's discussions about the quality or morality of a person, takes on a similar meaning to *fides* in the context of De Amicitia: there is a sense of the reliability of a person and their honesty of intention. This meaning reaches back to the word's original application by the architect Vitruvius: there, *integritas* denotes the solidity of a well-founded structure that will hold firmly against tremors or quakes. This enriches Cicero's term by comparing human honor to the stability of a building. The significance of Cicero describing a person as *integer* (the adjectival form of *integritas*) develops from its use in

⁵ Cf. discussion on pages 4 and 5.

his law court orations; these texts give *integritas* the meaning of honesty and dedication to the Republic, family, or their home.

Huck shows himself to be *integer* when he and Jim come into contact for the first time after running away. Upon their meeting, Huck promises he won't report Jim to anyone, Jim confesses that he's run away, and when Huck shows signs of shock that Jim would do such a thing, Jim worries that Huck will expose him after all. Huck's initial reaction shows the way he has been conditioned to think of slaves as property rather than as oppressed people. Despite such learned opinions, his next response shows *integritas* in his character, and he stays true to his word. The architectural aspect of *integritas* is evident here as well; Jim's admission shakes Huck's socially conditioned consciousness, but his true integrity (which is masked by the socially conditioned ideas) can sustain the tremors without damage.

“Jim!” “But mind, you said you wouldn' tell – you know you said you wouldn' tell, Huck.” “Well, I did. I said I wouldn't, and I'll stick to it. Honest *injun*, I will. People would call me a low-down abolitionist for keeping mum – but that don't make no difference. I ain't a-going to tell, and I ain't a-going back there, anyways”(H.F., 55).

The way Huck describes the potential response he would get from others shows that there is a certain societal expectation for the treatment of runaway slaves, but Huck values his *integritas* over adhering to that expectation. This is an action in defiance of their historically particular government, but one that is in line with both Cicero's and Mark Twain's ideal of *res publica*.

When Huck and Jim have been moving down the river for a time they encounter two men and begin to travel in a group. The strangers introduce themselves as a duke and a dauphin⁶, and

⁶ *Dauphin* is the title for the crown prince of France (a position that no longer exists due to the overthrow of the French monarchy in 1792).

Huck immediately sees through this falsehood and identifies the men to be similar in kind to his own father: blustering, lying drunkards who place money above all else, and “If [Huck] never learnt nothing else out of pap, [he] learnt the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way”(H.F., 160). Huck’s *integritas* appears cracked at this time; for as the foursome travels down the river, the fake duke and dauphin take on various roles in each town they pass through and swindle the townspeople out of large amounts of money. During the description of their first heist, Huck simply relays the details of the situation without passing an opinion. His only judgment of that particular scam is to call the duke smart when the man prints a “Wanted” poster with a likeness of Jim upon it so that the group could pretend to be returning Jim to his rightful owner if they run into any suspicious people. As the cons go on, Huck outwardly recognizes their actions as wrong: he and Jim talk about how nasty they are, and Huck seems to be resigned to their actions, saying that to behave such is “in the breed”(H.F., 196).

Huck’s resignation begins to dissipate when the swindlers decide to impersonate the relatives of a dead man to steal the inheritance the man left behind. The apparent cracks in Huck’s foundation turn out to be an illusion. At first, he simply relays his feelings about them in his narration, calling them “the beatenest lot, them two frauds, that [he] ever struck”(H.F., 207) and “the worst [he] ever struck”(H.F., 216). In response to their theatrical counterfeit mourning, he declares to the reader, “I never see anything so disgusting”(H.F., 209). The kindness shown to him by the young women who were the original heirs to the fortune is the inciting factor that pushes him to the point of stealing back the money from the swindlers. His actions display the same kind of personal moral code Huck follows when treating Jim well: a person who is a friend to Huck, and treats him kindly, deserves to be treated well in return. It seems that for Huck to

behave in such a way, it is necessary that he have face-to-face contact with a person or some other evidence that they are worthy of kindness or aid. In the same way that Huck and Jim's closeness deepens as they continue to put themselves on the line for each other, so also does Huck's care for the young women deepen as they treat him with kindness⁷.

The third of Cicero's four terms is *aequitas*, a word which denotes fairness or evenness of the mind⁸. This word appears less frequently in texts previous to Cicero, but does show up in Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*⁹. Caesar's use of *aequitas* relates to the fairness of the terms of a pact and the condition of society at peace. The word does not yet seem to be related to interactions between individuals or a person's behavior, but rather to stability of conditions or a balanced pact between warring groups. The word becomes more common as a description of character when Cicero applies it to the attributes of a *vir bonus* alongside other terms such as *fortitudo* (strength used prudently), *temperantia* (temperance), *prudentia* (prudence), *virtus* (excellence), and *veritas* (truth). In an oration defending Aulus Cluentius in court, Cicero combines *aequitas* with terms that seem to be closely associated with proper citizenship:

... and also it is the part of a great and wise man, O judges, when he has taken in his hand his judicial tablet, to think that he is not alone, and that it is not lawful for him to do

⁷ It is not identical, but this idea of goodwill towards another growing because of acts of kindness is also present in *De Amicitia*: Cicero claims that when our friends demonstrate their goodwill toward us, our relationship grows deeper because "love is further strengthened by the receiving of a kindly service, by the evidence of another's care for us, and by closer familiarity" (9.29). When a friend expresses their devotion in this way, we connect it to the love we have for them already due to their virtue, and our feelings become stronger.

⁸ Cicero himself was a fair and equitable man, who once freed his dearest slave, Tyro, and treated him as a close friend. Cicero and Tyro's relationship was so good that Tyro continued to live with and serve Cicero out of love and respect.

⁹ It is noteworthy that Caesar despises the hypocrisy of the Roman senate and thinks all men should be treated with respect, despite their class and rank.

whatever he wishes; but that he must employ in his deliberations law, [*aequitas*], religion, and good faith... (Cicero, Speech for Aulus Cluentius, 58.159).

In the above passage, *aequitas* stands alongside law and *religio*. The word *religio* is often translated as “religion”, but it has a broader sense of moral obligation or duty: literally, the state of being anchored to something greater, like a boat to a dock. Here, goodness and wisdom connect directly with one’s relationship to the *res publica* through law and duty. The use of *aequitas* in this setting and also in a conversation about friendship associates the concepts of duty to Cicero’s *res publica* with moral goodness as an individual and as a friend.

Because of the parameters of their historically particular government¹⁰, Huck and Jim seem to be least prepared to display *aequitas*. They have lived their whole lives in a political situation in which Huck is better than Jim because of his whiteness, regardless of any other characteristics they have. As a result, Huck is conditioned to believe that Black people are lesser, and Jim is forced to behave as though white people are better; thus neither of them can behave with *aequitas* towards all people. However, Huck in particular is able to grow and learn that Jim is actually quite similar to himself through their relationship. Far down the river, the dauphin sells Jim off, and Huck has to try to figure out how to fix the situation on his own. Huck weighs the option of telling the folks at home of Jim’s location, reasoning that if he has to continue his life as a slave, then he should be one back up the river near his family. But Huck is wary of this choice because he feared that Miss Watson’s anger at Jim’s escape will lead her to sell him back down the river right away. Huck’s motivation is mixed, since he is concerned about his status as a white person and fears that his own reputation will be utterly ruined if people find out about the

¹⁰ Cf. discussion on page 4 and 5.

role he played in Jim's escape (270-271). He could also be lawfully persecuted for aiding a runaway slave. Huck ends up writing a letter to Miss Watson so she will know where Jim is, but when the time comes, he cannot bring himself to send it and rips it up instead. Just before discarding the letter, Huck reminisces over all the good times he and Jim have had on the river together, showing the same personal morality that he displayed previously in his handling of the dead man's inheritance. This innate morality has won out each time over the learned moral standard Huck acquired from his guardians. He even exclaims that he will go to Hell before ratting Jim out. The personal development Huck experiences is a result of the way his relationship with Jim challenges his socially conditioned ideas about slaves.

Liberalitas, the last of Cicero's four terms, relates to human character in similar ways to the other three prior to its inclusion in De Amicitia. In general, *liberalitas* emerges in discussions of politically significant individuals as a compliment to their character. The word refers to the free man, a truly free man who doesn't need to treat others as inferior and is able to appreciate them beyond the conventions of rank and class, which allows them to act freely with goodwill towards others. It appears in Caesar's De Bello Gallico, describing the reason another man has great favor with the people and also referring to his own kindness and generosity, and connects to the consideration of a man's generosity in Catullus. Caesar is free in this way, which is why he is so popular among his soldiers and the general population; his confidence from *liberalitas* allowed him to work alongside his men regardless of how dirty or dangerous the task. Cicero applies the term in a political context in his letters to Atticus, his close friend:

Let this be our new method of conquering - to fortify ourselves by mercy and kindness. (Cicero, Letters to Atticus, 9.7).

Clearly, a political figure can be truly effective if he behaves as a free man, respecting others regardless of their rank and class. The only occurrence of *liberalitas* in conjunction with another of the terms is a loose association with *fides* (faith) in a long list of abstract nouns in Cicero's De Oratorio, along with *iustitia*, *amicitia*, *prudentia*, and *pietas* (lawfulness, friendship, practical wisdom, and devotion).

Liberalitas is a component also in Huck's behavior when he and Jim run into criminals looting a boat stuck on a rock and threatening with death one in their midst. Even though they are robbers, Huck is concerned that they may die if the boat is dislodged. He takes it upon himself to find a watchman and concocts a lie to push the watchman to go investigate the boat. Because of Huck's quick thinking, the criminals' lives will be saved, and they will hopefully also be captured in the process. Huck respects and values the lives of the criminals even though he perceives them as morally reprehensible (H.F., 91-5).

Jim also displays *liberalitas* when he and Huck are separated on the river due to a larger boat colliding with their raft. He stays in the area while Huck lodges with a local family, making contact with the family's slaves, gathering information, and stocking up on supplies for the two of them. Jim even finds their damaged raft through listening to the slaves' conversation. Herein lies Jim's kindness: in response to Huck's confusion about why Jim didn't send for him sooner, Jim says, "Well, 'twarn't no use to 'sturb you, Huck, tell we could do somfn. I ben a-buyin' pots en pans en vittles, as I got a chanst, en a-patchin' up de raf'" ... (H.F., 142). Jim had been living in the woods, in hiding and without his companion; his choice to stay in the woods and collect supplies until there were enough to continue their trip allowed Huck to stay comfortable for a time inside a home with a family taking care of him. Although Jim is in danger at this time, more

so because he does not have Huck there to pretend they are master and slave, his *liberalitas* enables him to do these good deeds freely for Huck.

Thus far we have discussed the requisite building blocks that must be present in an individual before they can participate in friendship. We must now look to the aspects of Cicero's and Twain's models that describe the actual relationships between pairs of individuals. The most noteworthy aspects of the friendship outlined in De Amicitia are as follows: equality between superiors and inferiors; remaining a firm friend in difficult times. Each of these attributes appears also in Mark Twain's model of friendship.

We have already addressed what Cicero means when he refers to a virtuous man or *vir bonus*, and how Huck and Jim also fit that description. Now we will see the extent to which he believes two friends should be similar to each other, because "friendship is nothing else than an accord in all things, human and divine, conjoined with mutual goodwill and affection" (D.A., 6.20). Near the beginning of the text, Laelius presents an extensive list of the things he and Scipio share that contribute to the success of their friendship: political and personal concerns, living together, going to war together, and essentially full agreement in interests, opinions, and political views. He claims that the two had never upset each other and were united in all areas of life. The argument lies in the idea that nature seeks out things similar to itself:

And what if I also add, as I may fairly do, that nothing so allures and attracts anything to itself as likeness does to friendship? Then it surely will be granted as a fact that *virī boni* love and join to themselves other *virī boni*, in a union which is almost that of relationship and nature. For there is nothing more eager or more greedy than nature for what is like itself (D.A., 14.50).

From the very beginning of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, we see that the racial divide between Huck and Jim does not prevent them from being friends, and Mark Twain works to establish deep connections between the characters even before they interact directly in the text. Both characters belong to the fringes of 19th-century America – one is a slave, the other one of the poorest whites. Because Jim is Black, and a slave, society, by custom and law, forcibly excludes him. He is under the control of whoever owns him, and has no agency over his life unless he puts himself in danger of bodily harm or death by running away. While Huck is white, and therefore able to move more freely in different social circles, he is also very poor, which means that he cannot comfortably remain in those social settings and they exclude him by custom. Because of an impoverished upbringing, he rejects the refined manners and habits that his guardian, the Widow Douglas, tries to teach him, thereby adding to his separation from society and bringing him closer to Jim.

Twain further develops the link between them through the vehicle of the relationship Huck has with his father. Huck's father is an abusive, alcoholic parent who attempts to steal Huck's money, prevents him from getting any education, and kidnaps him to assert ownership over him. This kind of relationship laid out alongside the system of slavery present at the time leads the reader to connect Huck's father's tyrannical behavior with that of a slave owner, especially considering that when Huck and an adult ally go to court to free Huck from the legal ownership a parent has over a child, the judge – regardless of testimonies about the father's abusive nature – ruled that “courts mustn't interfere and separate families if they could help it”(H.F., 27). Huck has to go so far as to fake his own death to escape (H.F., 31-43).

Another more subtle similarity they share is a sincere belief in superstitions. Although Huck's narration of many of Jim's superstitious behaviors has an element of humor, he goes to Jim soon after for a consultation with a kind of oracle Jim uses to tell fortunes because he saw signs that his father had returned to the area (H.F., 22). Not only does this choice show Huck's superstition as a counterpart to Jim's, but it also shows that Huck has a level of comfort with Jim which leads him to seek Jim's advice in the face of an unsettling and potentially harmful situation.

Soon after Huck fakes his own death, he meets Jim some ways down the river. This meeting further solidifies the connection between the two characters: both are abused, undervalued, and treated as property, and in fleeing their respective kinds of bondage they choose the same path of escape¹¹. Each sees the river as an avenue by which they can leave that which oppresses them. Privilege and power dynamics change the way the path works for each of them. These factors are also the boundaries that limit their friendship. Their shared choice is especially significant considering the great weight Cicero places in the theory that true friendship comes from nature, stemming from mutual love between individuals and bringing with it advantages and pleasure. On a personal level, this love grows from the realization that we have met someone "whose habits and character are congenial with our own; because in him we seem to behold, as it were, a sort of lamp of uprightness and virtue" (D.A., 8.27).

The next significant piece of Cicero's construct of friendship is the leveling of inequalities between friends. In order to avoid conflicts or jealousy, "those who are superior

¹¹ Here Mark Twain actualizes an idea represented in both Aristotle and Cicero: the friend as "another myself" or "ἕτερος αὐτός". "As the virtuous man is to himself, he is to his friend also (for his friend is another self)" (N.E., 1170b5-6).

should lower themselves, [and], in a measure, [they should] lift up their inferiors” (D.A., 20.72). Cicero believes that this leveling will prevent the inferior friend from “[grieving] that he is surpassed by the [superior] in intellect, fortune, or position” (D.A., 20.71). Given the stipulation that those who are able to form true friendships must already enjoy wealth, power, and general self-subsistence so they do not pursue friendships for the sake of advantages, we may assume that the discrepancies in intellect, fortune, and position Cicero mentions here are slight variations among the *viri boni*.

During their time on the river, Huck and Jim generally avoid conflict in regards to one being superior to the other in wealth, power, or intellect. Although they are not among the higher classes of wealth and power in relation to society, they have their own measure of class on the river which sets them alongside each other. They are both clever and thoughtful, and each presents solutions or ideas when they meet with challenges along the journey. Jim puts forth the idea that Huck should dress up as a girl on his trip into town to get information more safely (H.F., 69); on more than one occasion, Huck makes up details of an intricate backstory to curious passersby to alleviate suspicion (H.F., 92-5, 125-6, 160-1, etc.); Jim and Huck contemplate the story of King Solomon together (H.F., 99-100). In this way, they show throughout the story that they are comparable in intellect in many ways. In terms of wealth, the two share everything while they live on the river, so we cannot speak of any disparity of wealth between them. The area in which they differ most is that of power: as mentioned above, they live in a nation that sees them as fundamentally unequal because of their respective races. However, when they are living in their created *res publica* on their island and then on the raft, they are existing outside

these imposed social mores; and although Huck is still retraining himself to reject the prejudice he developed, he respects Jim's point of view and overturns his own bias on multiple occasions.

While Huck has been conditioned to think himself better than any Black person, Huck shows that he is working to level himself with Jim when he and Jim find themselves in a storm and become separated for a night. Huck plays a prank on Jim in which he pretends that the storm was just a dream, and strings him along for a short while before exposing the prank. Jim, having attached himself to the idea that he had dreamed the traumatic separation, is understandably hurt upon realizing Huck's lie:

When I got all wore out wid work, en wid de callin' for you, en went to sleep, my heart wuz mos' broke bekase you wuz los', en I didn' k'yer no' mo' whwat become er me en de raf'. En when I wake up en fine you back ag'in, all safe en soun', de tears come, en I could 'a' got down on my knees en kiss yo' foot, I's so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin' 'bout wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim wid a lie. Dat truck dah is *trash*; en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fren's en makes 'em ashamed (H.F., 109).

Jim does not hold back in this criticism of Huck's behavior, and Huck truly takes it to heart. Before the journey with Jim, Huck did not have to look after anyone besides himself; he is admittedly held back by his learned prejudice, and has to really prepare himself before he can apologize:

It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a n*****; but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterward, neither. I didn't do him no

more mean tricks, and I wouldn't done that one if I'd 'a' knowed it would make him feel that way (H.F., 109-110).

In this passage we see Huck struggling with what he perceives as coming down to Jim's level; but we also see Huck having no regrets about doing so, and showing that he wouldn't have played such a trick on Jim if he'd known Jim would be so hurt. Huck displays a willingness to lower himself (as the superior party, according to the law and custom), and also, due to his difference with Jim, is able to learn and become a better person. Despite Huck's shortcomings, he maintains the evenness between himself and Jim as a goal; in this way Mark Twain represents Cicero's ideal of superior and inferior behaving as equals.

The last attribute of Cicero's concept of friendship we will discuss is that of remaining a steadfast friend in times of trouble. Cicero argues that those who are flighty either when they themselves are experiencing success or when their friends are experiencing failures are common, but those who stand alongside their friends in all situations are few and far between:

... "When Fortune's fickle the faithful friend is found;"

yet it is on these two charges that most men are convicted of fickleness: they either hold a friend of little value when their own affairs are prosperous, or they abandon him when his are adverse. Whoever, therefore, in either of these contingencies, has shown himself staunch, immovable, and firm in friendship ought to be considered to belong to that class of men which is exceedingly rare—aye, almost divine (D.A., 17.64).

Such a staunch friend would obviously display the characteristics *fides* and *integritas*, reliable in times of trouble and supportive with a solid foundation regardless of the circumstances. The

friend could not be suspected of entering into the relationship for the sake of their own benefit, but only for the sake of the shared love itself.

If we recall the many times Huck and Jim resolutely wait for each other when they separate, there can be no doubt that they are loyal and unwavering in their friendship. As mentioned above, when Huck finds out that the town is after Jim, he immediately reinforces his allegiance with Jim by putting forth his best effort to hasten their escape. When they are forcibly separated by the storm or the boat crashing into their raft, they come back to each other and their relationship deepens with each reunion. Even when the dauphin sells Jim to the Phelps family, Huck immediately goes after him with the intention of stealing him back. At this time, Huck and Jim are forced out of their created *res publica* and back into the society that harms them; but even upon this return to the parameters of their historically particular government, Huck and Jim do not abandon their relationship. Huck is restrained now more than ever before by societal convention because the attitudes and potential hostility of those around him prevent him from saving Jim. But even considering these limitations, Huck continues to work towards freeing Jim with the help of Tom Sawyer until there is no possible chance of their success. Jim and Huck never again get away from the roles imposed upon them by their historically particular government, and they are unable, in that setting, to reveal that they have developed a friendship. In the end, they cannot sustain their relationship in the way it existed in the *res publica* they created on the river, but until that final moment they stand together.

Through our examination of De Amicitia, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and the historical contexts of Cicero and Mark Twain, we see that the authors produce notably similar models of friendship in the face of political turmoil and morally corrupt government; thus Mark

Twain's depiction of friendship does reflect the concept Cicero proposes. Their models each include an idealized *res publica* as a commonwealth valuing the good of the whole and their characters each display *fides*, *integritas*, *aequitas*, and *liberalitas*. Additionally, Cicero's idealistic pair of friends, Laelius and Scipio, and Mark Twain's actualized pair, Huck and Jim, both display the necessary features of Cicero's concept: accordance between friends, leveling of inequalities, and steadfastness in times of misfortune. These conclusions indicate that the utopian notion of friendship, with its existence in a united commonwealth, survives regardless of our historically particular governments and their flaws.

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