Identity, Society, and Gender in British and American Quest Romance

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Abstract

The paper discusses the elements of the quest romance in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and Jerome David Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye* (1951). It focuses on the novels' male protagonists who embark on an identity quest by distancing themselves from their family and friends and experiencing numerous adventures. The more adventures the protagonist undertakes, the more he learns about himself and the world around him. Yet, towards the end of his journey, he realizes that he does not fit into society and that he must continue with his quest. Accordingly, neither of these characters' quests leads to a closure. The analysis pays attention to both the hero's psychological development and his changed relation to society upon his return. It also interprets Defoe's, Swift's, Twain's, and Salinger's works in terms of social critique as all of them draw attention to important political and social issues of their time. Whereas Defoe and Swift expose the psychology of colonialism, corruption, and dishonesty, Twain and Salinger address racial issues, hypocrisy, and materialism of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American society, respectively. Additionally, the paper discusses the role of gender in shaping the narrative formulas and social implications of the quest genre.

Keywords:

Robinson Crusoe, *Gulliver's Travels*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Catcher in The Rye*, quest romance, identity quest, British and American society

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Introduction

The rise of the English novel started in the eighteenth century with the work of Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding. However, these three novelists do not constitute a unique literary school. Although their novels in many ways contrast one another and indicate little mutual influence, they all signify a departure from the old literary tradition (cf. Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* 9-10). In the eighteenth century, numerous sub-genres of the novel appeared. The novels kept the form and idea that Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding had started; yet, they differed in theme, characters, events they described, the narrative technique, mood, imagery, as well as the audience they addressed. Adventurous novels and tales mesmerized the reading public in particular. From sea adventures, countries unheard of, and eccentric nations to common, yet easy to relate to, protagonists, adventure stories were vastly diverse in their plots. Due to their diversity, different types of adventure stories developed.

This paper looks into British and American quest romances, novels depicting the development of male individuals who, while experiencing various adventures, both seek their identity and criticize the society they live in. The paper analyses four novels that trace a male character's identity quest: Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and Jerome David Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye* (1951). It emphasizes the absence of female characters in those novels and the fact that their main protagonists are all alienated individuals who are not sure whether they belong to society or not. That is the reason why they embark on an identity quest in an attempt to free themselves from social constraints.

The first chapter provides an introduction to early travel literature, describing how the novelists chose their characters carefully in order to make them more actual and easy to relate to. The following chapter deals with the meaning of the term *quest romance.* It analyzes its basic characteristics – dynamic and long narratives, exploration of a place or one's own mind, and relocation of the protagonist into unexplored environment.

The third chapter discusses the narrative strategies and conventions of the quest genre employed in the characterization of Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck, and Holden, as well as the psychology of these characters' identity quests. The fourth chapter examines Crusoe's quest for identity. It describes his adventurous life and his wish to change as an individual by finding his own freedom. The following chapter investigates Gulliver's adventures, which are also a consequence of his quest for identity, emphasizing that, just like Crusoe, Gulliver too

wants to find a place in society where he could be free. The sixth chapter looks at Huck Finn’s adventures with a runaway slave Jim. Moreover, it studies Huck’s personal quest for freedom, namely identity. Likewise, the seventh chapter gives an account of Holden’s ventures and his quest for self.

The eighth chapter investigates the role of gender in these four novels. It seeks to explain how the focus on a male hero, as well as a lack of female characters and courtship affects the narrative. The last chapter discusses the elements of social criticism in these four novels. Furthermore, it aims to uncover how the outcome of the protagonists' quest brings change in their beliefs and attitudes toward society and therefore focuses both on the self-quest itself and on their attitudes and opinions after the quest has been completed.

1. Early Travel Literature

In the early eighteenth century, the novel was not a unified genre as it encompassed a wide range of different prose narratives, such as philosophical, gothic, sentimental or adventure novels (Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe* 1). Typical of these prose narratives, both in England and across Europe, was the attempt of the novelists to create a more realistic, actual experience that the readers could relate to and to distance their work from the unrealistic genres of epic and romance and their serious narratives (Richetti, *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe* 4). Undoubtedly, eighteenth-century novelists aspired to design their novels as if they were true stories. Therefore, they chose common people for their protagonists, which gave the readers a chance to experience the adventures along with the protagonist.

According to Ian Watt, the early novelists wanted to depart from the tradition, from the knightly tales and serious epics that had been produced before the eighteenth century. For that particular reason, they attempted to create distinctly individual characters living in the contemporary social environment (*The Rise of the Novel* 19). Daniel Defoe started this tradition with *Robinson Crusoe,* and, what is more, he seemed to be the first British writer "who visualized the whole of his narrative as though it occurred in an actual physical environment" (Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* 26). This happened mainly because novelists wanted to engage their readers into the plot itself, to bring them more closely to their heroes and enable them to live through their adventures. These heroes tend to be ordinary people and the adventures described are their daily lives. For that to seem legitimate and actual for the readers, the plot had to be set in an actual physical environment and the daily lives of the heroes had to be provided with "a detailed account." Otherwise, they would have been of no interest to the reading public (Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* 60).

Early eighteenth-century readers, as Backsheider suggests, were greedy for knowledge, experience, and novelty, and they wanted to look through the protagonists' eyes at what they could not see and experience themselves (175). Under these circumstances, the writers of travel and criminal literature designed their heroes as "restless, often rebellious and uprooted young men hungry for adventure, freedom, and economic gain, and this fact drew the forms closer together" (175):

> By 1720 travel literature, too, had become highly formulaic. The traveler was not the Renaissance patriot-dreamer but an opportunistic wanderer. These

> travelers were usually blown off course, shipwrecked, captured by pirates, or offered unexpected opportunities that put them in strange countries with exotic people, customs, and wildlife. (Backsheider 175)

The travel narrative formula represented a vision shared by novelists and readers at that time. It centered on a common person from the public who began his adventure to seek freedom and ended up wandering in the world, describing his daily life all along the journey. What is more, the narrative patterns of such books often included ultimate moral reflections that suited the conventional choices of their readers (Backsheider 175). In other words, the eighteenth-century readers wanted the characters to be adventurous, defiant, and individualistic. They expected the heroes to undergo an adventure in order to be more knowledgeable about the world and to be able to reprove society.

2. Quest Romance

"Quest romance is a prevalent literary form that over the centuries has generated bizarre, fascinating, and seemingly endless variations" (Mikics 252). The label *quest romance* has nothing to do with falling in love, courtship, or marriage; it rather concerns specific formal and thematic features of this type of the novel. *Romance* stands for a wide variety of novels that deal with out-of-the-ordinary adventures, peculiar or otherworldly circumstances, difficult quests, and inexplicable triumphs (Crane 26). In other words, *quest romance* stands for a novel in which the main protagonist pursues a particular quest in order to attain a higher and better state. During this quest the hero is exposed to a sequence of adventures, which help him resolve his initial quest:

> In essence, the rejection of restrictive cultural formats that triggers the protagonist's desire to escape society simultaneously operated as a rejection of the concept of stable narrative centers; that is, the forward movement of the quest into unknown *geographic* space is so orchestrated as to create a linear projection into undefined *textual* space. (Boone 967)

To put it differently, *quest romance* displays a narrative that departs from the traditional romantic stories. It describes the adventures of a male protagonist who escapes society and travels new places. The long narration of the protagonist's journeys gives place for his personal observations and cognition of his real quest.

According to Patricia Meyer Spacks, the earliest examples of travel literature written in the eighteenth century consist of a narrative that follows the concept of "the more adventure the better" (54). Spacks suggests that the speed of narration and fundamental interest in exciting events are crucial for the early novels (58). D'Amassa confirms this fact, stating that "adventure stories almost always move quickly, and the pace of the plot is as least as important as characterization, setting, and other elements of created work" (Introduction vii). Evidently, the adventure stories must evoke the actual reliving of the events, and that is why they are dynamic in narration. This is achieved by presenting the protagonist's ceaseless inner struggles, or events that occur right after one another. Clearly, the adventures of the heroes are presented and narrated swiftly in order to engage the readers into adventures and to give the quest signification and termination. Moreover, "it is precisely this machinelike movement that gives adventure its ability to incorporate change" (Murray 155). This implies that the speed of narration works not only as an element that initiates a quest and propels the

protagonists forward but also as an element which gives the protagonists a chance to realize what their adventures mean to them and what changes they bring along. These changes will eventually lead them to shape different opinions from the ones at the beginning of their quest and thus, change as individuals.

Just like the early examples of adventure novels, modern adventure novels have numerous variations. Acording to D'Amassa,

> They do not constitute a distinct, separate genre such as detective stories or romances or science fiction, but, rather, intersect and overlap them all. In one sense, almost all fiction involves some sort of adventure, exposure to new experiences or knowledge, changes in the shapes of the characters' lives. Although there is no easily definable line of demarcation, we will assume that an adventure is an event or series of events that happen outside the ordinary course of the protagonist's life, usually accompanied by danger, often by physical action. (Introduction vii)

Furthermore, typical of quest romances is that they are long in narrative. This occurs, as Franco Moretti concludes, because adventures make the novels

> wide; they are the great explorers of the fictional world: battlefields, oceans, castles, sewers, prairies, islands, slums, jungles, galaxies. Practically all great popular chronotopes have arisen when the adventure plot has moved into a new geography and activated its narrative potential. Just as prose multiplies styles, then, adventure multiplies stories, and forward-looking prose is perfect for adventure, syntax and plot moving in unison. (3-4)

Boone suggests that because it is long, "the quest narrative thus has an effect of being always already in process, of forever reaching after new and unexpected plateaus of meaning" (967). Surely, in order for the plot to be rational, the quester must explore something, be it an island, a new continent, or his own mind. This implies that the narrative will be long, too, since quest requires a sequence of adventures to produce anticipation. Additionally, adventures in *quest romances* tend to go on forever. It is obvious that the narrative of a *quest romance* has to be a little longer than usual in order to give the readers an opportunity to identify with the protagonists as closely as possible. Yet, after a longer narration, it is expected that the adventure will end with a significant quest, the one that with the closure of the novel also brings a change for the protagonist.

Another trait of adventure novels is that the protagonists are usually, but not always, removed from their usual surroundings. The protagonists may distance themselves from their familiar surroundings deliberately or unconsciously. Very often the bodily journey of the protagonist is reflected by a mental journey, giving the protagonist a double cognition – one about the world itself and one about his own identity (D'Amassa vii). In other words, the quest narrative follows the concept of discovering the unknown in order to discover one's self. The reason why the protagonists must make this voyage to the unknown is because [their] "true self can only exist *outside* the parameters of [their] culture" (Boone 963). That is, the protagonists become aware of their identity outside their familiar surroundings; the lone hero’s physical journey brings about the development of his self-reliant identity (Boone 964).

3. Conventions of the Quest Genre in the Characterization of Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck, and Holden

One of the earliest quest romances is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe.* Having in mind the eighteenth-century readers' thirst for circumstantial detail of common people, Defoe tried to quench it "with tales of slave trading, harrowing sea escape, shipwreck, island exile, cannibal adventure, and (back in Europe) wolf attack" (Seidel 187). A couple of years later, Jonathan Swift continued with the trend of quest romance by writing *Gulliver's Travels.* Swift's novel resembles Defoe's work in many ways, but still differs from it due to Swift's use of fantasy elements in his adventure tale. The trend of describing a plain individual who leaves his home by undergoing meaningful adventures continued with nineteenth-century novels. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain follows the established pattern of the original quest romances, whereas Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye* can be interpreted as a modern quest romance which retains a lot of similarities to quest romances, but is deprived of many of its common traits.

Apart from being long and dynamic in narration, all of these adventure novels are narrated by their main protagonist. The beginning of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* gives us an insight into the protagonist's personal life and his background:

> I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. He got a good estate by merchandise, and leaving off his trade, lived afterwards at York, from whence he had married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson, a very good family in that country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but, by the usual corruption of words in England, we are now called – nay we call ourselves and write or name – Crusoe; and so my companions always called me. I had two elder brothers, one of whom was lieutenant-colonel to an English regiment of foot in Flanders, formerly commanded by the famous Colonel Lockhart, and was killed at the battle near Dunkirk against the Spaniards. What became of my second brother I never knew, any more than my father or mother knew what became of me. (2)

Not only do we find out who Robinson Crusoe is and what type of a family he descends from but we also learn about him directly, from the first-person narrative perspective. Crusoe

begins by explaining details of his personal life and continues to do so throughout the novel. Consequently, the reader can relate to and experience his adventures together with him.

Jonathan Swift introduces the protagonist of *Gulliver's Travels* in a similar way*:*

> My father had a small estate in Nottinghamshire: I was the third of five sons. He sent me to Emanuel College in Cambridge at fourteen years old, where I resided three years, and applied myself close to my studies; but he charge of maintaining me, although I had a very scanty allowance, being too great for a narrow fortune, I was bound apprentice to Mr. James Bates, an eminent surgeon in London, with whom I continued four years. (11)

Like Defoe, Swift uses the first person narrator so that the readers can learn about the protagonist's personal story and identify with him.

On the other hand, the beginning of Mark Twain's nineteenth-century quest romance to some extent departs from Defoe's and Swift's novels. Twain's first person narrator seemingly follows the pattern established in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*:

> You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,* but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There were things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied, one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. . . . (Twain 11)

However, the beginning of the novel reveals nothing about Huck Finn’s personal life or his family. In the first paragraph, Huck Finn only discloses the information on Mark Twain's previous novel and his adventures with Tom Sawyer.

Similarly, the first person narrator in Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye*, sixteen-year old Holden Caulfield, does not reveal anything about his past life:

> If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, this stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty

> personal about them. They're quite touchy about anything like that, especially my father. (1)

Holden openly refuses to talk about his childhood, showing no interest in sharing his story with the readers. Holden is cynical and takes an individualist stand at the very beginning, unlike Crusoe, Gulliver, and Huck Finn who are yet to become individualists.

All four protagonists "leave [their families] at an early age never to return" (Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* 65) or they do not have a family. Family plays a crucial role in the quest of all four protagonists. What is more, family is an important element for understanding the protagonists' quests. Crusoe embarks on a journey despite his parents' wishes:

> . . . but I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea; and my inclination to this led me so strongly against the will, nay, the commands of my father, and against all the entreaties and persuasions of my mother and other friends, that there seemed to be something fatal in that propensity of nature, tending directly to the life of misery which was to befall me. (Defoe 2-3)

Crusoe decides to pursue his own wishes, as an individual, for his own well-being. Similarly to Crusoe, Gulliver leaves his wife and children on several occasions because he is "determined to go to sea again" (Swift 12). He also follows his own desires and leaves home because he thinks that he will feel better on a journey, somewhere far away from the people he knows. Knowing that he "hain't got no family" (Twain 17), except a father who "you can't never find" (17), Huck decides to escape his own destiny when his father finally returns just to seize his money. Obviously, like Crusoe and Gulliver, Huck Finn is not satisfied with his current state and position in society. He lacks freedom and needs to distance himself from the society surrounding him. The same happens to Holden Caulfield:

> But all of a sudden, I changed my mind. All of a sudden, I decided what I'd really do, I'd get the hell out of Pencey – right that same night and all. I mean not wait till Wednesday or anything. I just didn't want to hang around anymore. It made me too sad and lonesome. (Salinger 45)

Holden feels as if he might fix the whole situation if he freed himself from the school and all the people who, according to his opinion, make him feel lonely.

According to Watt, "adventure stories demand the absence of conventional social ties" (*The Rise of the Novel* 65). This can be seen in the characterization of all four protagonists. Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck Finn, and Holden run away from the conventional social ties, driven

by a strange desire to find a better place for themselves. They are constantly dissatisfied with their lives before they embark on an identity quest. Crusoe cannot settle down after his second journey and goes on another one, completely aware that he is "born to be [his] own destroyer" (Defoe 50). Gulliver decides the same after his first journey: "I stayed but two months with my wife and family, for my insatiable desire of seeing foreign countries, would suffer me to continue no longer" (Swift 95). Huck Finn, like Crusoe and Gulliver, runs away from the life he has. After Huck's father abandons him and disappears, Widow Douglas adopts him and takes good care of him. Just as Huck has somewhat adjusted to the social norms of the widow, his father turns up and takes him away violently. That is when Huck decides to run away and find a more suitable place for himself. Similarly, Holden cannot deal with his real life and has to escape from school so that he can detach himself from his colleagues. Accordingly, social constraint as an element that initiates the quest is found in all four novels. Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck Finn, and Holden feel an urge to leave their homes; they feel as if they do not belong to the society they live in and that they must free themselves from it. Their quest begins with the feeling that their individualistic desires must be fulfilled.

4. Quest for Identity in *Robinson Crusoe*

According to Ian Watt, "*Robinson Crusoe* is certainly the first novel in the sense that it is the first fictional narrative in which an ordinary person's daily activities are the center of continuous literary attention" (*The Rise of the Novel* 74). Not only is Crusoe the first ordinary person whose daily activities are described but he is also one of the first real questers for freedom and identity. His adventures signify his development along with the development of the narrative. Crusoe changes, forms different opinions, sets up new standards, and follows different dreams from the ones in the beginning.

In his introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel* John Richetti states that quest romances at the beginning of the eighteenth century "tend to be about leaving home, making a break with the familiar world of childhood, finding your way, and often enough a mate, seeking your fortune, acquiring an identity by making your mark in the world and 'doing well'" (*The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel* 7). From an early age Crusoe has felt an urge to travel, and, having "consulted neither father nor mother any more, nor so much as sent them word of it, but leaving them to hear of it as they might, without asking God's blessing or my father's" (Defoe 7-8), he sets out to sea. His parents and the captain of the first ship warn Crusoe that he has chosen a hazardous path to follow, but he disregards their warnings (D'Amassa 204). His decision shows us that he wants to think for himself and be an individual. He also wants to create his life by his own desires and ideas, not according to desires of other people. Evidently, the reason for this is that he is not sure of his identity and is uncertain whether he belongs to this society. In that way he unconsciously searches for his true identity. What is more, he chooses the wandering life, which he knows is dangerous for him. Still, he does not have any qualms about any of his journeys and consciously follows the concept of the adventurous life.

Crusoe's quest for identity is characterized by confusion and disorder. After he travels to London, he becomes aware of his desire to travel the world. No longer after that, he makes his first journey across the ocean, to Guinea, where he becomes a slave of the pirates. After spending two years as a servant to a pirate captain, he manages to escape and craves for more adventure. As a result, he decides to go to Brazil with a Portuguese captain who previously saved him from the pirates. In Brazil, he buys sugar plantations and eventually becomes successful in "business and wealth" (Defoe 47). Yet, after acquiring wealth and some kind of freedom, he is not content at all. He admits:

> I could not be content now, but I must go and leave the happy view I had of being rich and thriving man in my new plantation, only to pursue a rash and immoderate desire of rising faster than the nature of the thing admitted; and thus I cast myself down again into the deepest gulf of human misery that ever man fell into, or perhaps could be consistent with life and a state of health in the world. (48)

To put it more simply, Crusoe wants to travel farther and acquire more wealth. His quest continues since he is restless even more after becoming a rich man. It is precisely his ambition to get rich that takes him to a ship bound to Africa, which gets caught in a severe storm and ends up shipwrecked. However, the urge to travel and see the world initiates his real quest. The main reason for his incessant travels is the search for his identity. This is obvious when Crusoe states that he felt solitary on his plantation as if he had been on a deserted island. Before his adventures Crusoe had everything he wanted; he was a prosperous owner of sugar plantations with good business prospects. However, the wealth he had only made him feel lonely. He desires to find a place where he will find fulfillment. In fact, by setting on another adventure and leaving his plantations, Crusoe wants to find a place for himself where he will be content. In other words, he is seeking his own identity.

After the ship to Africa is wrecked, Crusoe finds himself to be the only survivor, washed up on a deserted island. At first, he "is transported with joy at having been saved" (Watt, *Myths of Modern Individualism* 143), but soon he starts questioning why he is the only one who survived. In the next days he makes a couple of journeys to the wreck of the ship to save the supplies which he could benefit from. With the passage of time, Crusoe muddles through misfortune and builds a roof over his head, a fence, a table, and chairs. With years, he becomes successful in growing barley, rice, and corn. Yet, he feels sorry for himself:

> I, poor miserable Robinson Crusoe, being shipwrecked during a dreadful storm in the offing, came on shore on this dismal, unfortunate island, which I called "The Island of Despair;" all the rest of the ship’s company being drowned, and myself almost dead. (Defoe 89)

Crusoe initially pities himself and, even though he feels blessed to be the only one saved, he is desperate. He wishes that he had died in that storm too, for then he would not be so miserable now. However, his feelings and opinions concerning his desolation constantly change as time passes, which shows us a change of Crusoe as an individual.

After he falls ill, he turns to God: "Then I cried out, 'Lord, be my help, for I am in great distress.' This was the first prayer, if I may call it so, that I had made for many years" (116). Crusoe becomes much more religious after the serious illness and even starts to read the Bible on a daily basis. He reveals that up until then he was ignorant of God. This is another proof of his quest for identity and consequent growth. Throughout the course of his quest, he becomes religious and finds comfort in God. With time, this brings him happiness. He realizes that God's providence is responsible for his salvation and he starts to feel God's presence in everything he does.

In spite of being happy and feeling blessed, Crusoe feels lonesome and longs for company. Although he is surrounded with his goats, cats, dog, and parrot, he misses the company of human beings. He misses someone he could talk to:

> Oh that there had been but one or two, nay, or but one soul saved out of this ship, to have escaped to me, that I might but have one companion, one fellow-creature, to have spoken to me and to have conversed with! In all the time of my solitary life I never felt so earnest, so strong a desire after the society of my fellow-creatures, or so deep a regret at the want of it. (240)

Even though his desire for a companion is so strong, at the end he remonstrates himself, regretting the fact that he has yearned for company. Crusoe's feelings continuously rise and fall. He starts to feel good about himself living on a desolate island:

> It was now that I began sensibly to feel how much more happy this life I now led was, with all its miserable circumstances, than the wicked, cursed, abominable life I led all the past part of my days; and now I changed both my sorrows and my joys; my very desires altered, my affections changed their gusts, and my delights were perfectly new from what they were at my first coming, or, indeed, for the two years past. (144-45)

Crusoe realizes that the life he led before does not have any meaning to him now. After all, he confesses, his desires have altered, which means that his yearning for wealth has disappeared. He does not want to concentrate on money anymore. Having obtained wealth, he concludes that he still misses something to feel pleased – individuality. The only thing that now matters to him is his own well-being. Crusoe declares to be living a better life as a lonesome man, thus demonstrating his unwillingness to leave the island.

In the fifteenth year of his stay, Crusoe comes across a single footprint on a beach. He develops mixed feelings of happiness, fear, and confusion: "Then terrible thoughts racked my imagination . . ." (Defoe 200). As a result, Crusoe withdraws from everything, pondering over how the footprint got there. Finally, he assumes that it belongs to the cannibals, so he conveys a plan to ambush and kill them (Seidel 183). Ultimately, he dismisses this idea, bearing in mind that God would not approve of this deed. It is not until years later that he sees the cannibals on the beach and decides to help one of their victims: "It came very warmly upon my thoughts, and indeed irresistibly, that now was he time to get me a servant, and, perhaps, a companion or assistant; and that I was plainly called by Providence to save the poor creature's life" (260). Again, we see a sign of Crusoe's conversion to religion and his identity change. According to Spacks, Crusoe concludes that "the most significant event of his life is his religious conversion, the result of various happenings on the island" (42). Assured that it was Providence which saved his life, he decides to save the victim's life accordingly. Yet, it is obvious that he saves the man's life not just because it is God's sign but also because this will help him achieve his goal – to have a companion. We immediately find out that he designed this man to be his servant, not only a companion.

As planned, Crusoe treats the man as his servant, giving him the name Friday and calling himself the Master. He teaches Friday the English language and everything else that can make Friday useful and helpful in Crusoe's daily activities. He even converts Friday to Christianity:

> [A]nd when I reflected that in this solitary life which I have been confined to, I had not only been moved to look up to heaven myself, and to seek the Hand that had brought me here, but was now to be made an instrument, under Providence, to save the life, and for aught I knew, the soul of a poor savage, and bring him to the true knowledge of religion and of the Christian doctrine, that he might know Christ Jesus, in whom is life eternal; I say, when I reflected upon all these things, a secret joy ran through every part of My soul, and I frequently rejoiced that ever I was brought to this place, which I had so often thought the most dreadful of all afflictions that could possibly have befallen me. (Defoe 283)

This Crusoe's statement is crucial for understanding his quest for identity. He feels complete and carefree on this island, even more so when he meets Friday. He feels that he has nothing

to do with the rest of the world, and thanks God for bringing him to the deserted island. His quest for identity here finishes since he is finally free.

However, Crusoe decides to ruin his own happiness after spending twenty-eight years on the island. He leaves back home when he saves the captain of an English ship from the mutineers. Back home, "as a perfect stranger to all the world" (Defoe 357), he finds out that his parents passed away and that he is a rich man, owing to his plantations in Brazil. Yet, despite being wealthy, he feels that he is "inured to wandering life" (389). His discontent with being home appears only after he realizes that he never should have left his island. He confirms this in the last pages of his adventures: "I could not resist the strong inclination I had to see my island. . ." (Defoe 389). Clearly, Crusoe realizes that he was searching for his identity the whole time. At the end of his adventures, we find out that he wants to continue his search for self and go back to the place where he was free.

5. Quest for Identity in *Gulliver's Travels*

Just like Robinson Crusoe, English surgeon Lemuel Gulliver, the protagonist of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, belongs to the labor class. Same as Crusoe, Gulliver has dreamed of travelling from his early age. He has a wife and children; yet, he does not feel satisfied with his current situation. Since he wants to make something more of his life, he agrees to travel as a doctor on a ship bound to the South Sea. We can see that, just like Crusoe, Gulliver unconsciously sets out on a quest for his own identity. The only difference is that Gulliver's adventures are mixed up with elements of fantasy, and the whole quest is happening inside his mind. After a shipwreck, he finds himself tied by too many to be counted tiny people on an island of Lilliput. The importance of Gulliver's identity quest lies in his feelings and observations during the adventures and after his return home.

During his first adventure in Lilliput, he finds himself to be a giant among Lilliputians. This causes Gulliver to think over his size and his importance in the society. After he finds out about a war with the inhabitants of the nearby Island of Blefuscu, Gulliver offers his help to the Lilliputian emperor:

> I desired the secretary to present my humble duty to the emperor; and to let him know, that I thought it would not become me, who was a foreigner, to interfere with parties; but I was ready, with the hazard of my life, to defend his person and state against all invaders. (Swift 54)

This suggests that Gulliver, although not being in his own country or fighting for his own emperor, decides to help an emperor in an unknown land. Not only does he want to help Lilliputians but he is also willing to die for them. This tells much about his identity. All things considered, he does not think of his family or what will become of him. Gulliver is lost, not sure of his purpose in life. To put it more simply, Gulliver searches for something that will show him who he is and where he belongs. He believes that this purpose will be accomplished if he helps the Lilliputians in war. However, he does not think rationally. Later on, Lilliputians charge him for treason, and he escapes to Blefuscu, not even trying to defend himself.

After he manages to return home to England, he makes profit by showing the small-sized cattle he brought from Lilliput. Just like Crusoe, he becomes rich, but this does not stop him: "I stayed but two months with my wife and family, for my insatiable desire of seeing foreign countries would suffer me to continue no longer" (Swift 95). Consequently, in search

for something else but money, he begins a new adventure. This time, the adventure brings him to Brobdingnag. The situation is now reversed; the inhabitants are giants, and he is their tiny captive. Surely, Swift is using these variations in size and power to accentuate the possibility of seeing things from a different perspective, which can only result in a change of the main character (D'Amassa 69). In other words, Swift uses size to display Gulliver's point of view while being a giant and while being a tiny person among giants. As a result, Gulliver starts reflecting upon his state. When he realizes the situation he is in, he concludes that "being quite dispirited with toil, and wholly overcome by grief and despair, I lay down between two ridges, and heartily wished I might there end my days" (Swift 102). Not being in advantage anymore, Gulliver loses his power and pities himself, not knowing anymore "whether he looks good small or big" (Seidel 75).

Gulliver returns home from his second voyage to his wife and children. There he imagines to be in Lilliput again and acts as if he were a giant: "In short, I behaved myself so unaccountably, that they were all of the captain's opinion when he saw me first, and concluded I had lost my wits" (Swift 189). We can see that with time, Gulliver's condition deteriorates as on his quest for identity he starts to lose his mind. According to Bloom, "Gulliver loses credit as his adventures develop," (349) which is confirmed by his silly behavior. Trying to keep him sane, his wife forbids him to go to the sea ever again.

As can be expected, Gulliver proves to be a real quester and sets to the sea again, following the call of his "evil destiny" (Swift 189). This time, he ends up on a flying island of Laputa whose inhabitants are ordinary sized humans. This adventure, however, is not so relevant for Gulliver's development since it serves the purpose of satirizing the impractical ideas of Great Britain (D'Amassa 69). Gulliver returns home and finds himself to be very happy at home. Yet, he decides to go on his fourth and final voyage, this time as a captain of a ship. After his men conspire against him, he ends up in the country of Houyhnhnms. Houyhnhnms are horses who speak and think rationally, and they have their own servants, Yahoos, primitive humanlike creatures. This adventure enables Gulliver to learn about noble Houyhnhnms and their intelligence. Consequently, he is enthralled with this nation and wants to stay with them, never to return home. Gulliver's wish to stay is a sign of his complete change in identity; he does not feel like a human being anymore and "is not even certain what it is to be human, and his behavior suggests as much" (Bloom 349). It seems that Gulliver finds in the country of Houyhnhnms everything he did not find among humans:

> I enjoyed perfect health of body, and tranquility of mind; I did not feel the treachery or inconstancy of a friend, nor the injuries of a secret or open enemy. I had no occasion of bribing, flattering, or pimping, to procure the favour of any great man, or of his minion; I wanted no fence against fraud or oppression: here was neither physician to destroy my body, nor lawyer to ruin my fortune. . . . (Swift 354)

Indeed, Gulliver finds his true self surrounded by Houyhnhnms, but after one of them sees Gulliver naked by accident, he is driven away from their country, since he resembles Yahoos.

Because of this, Gulliver's quest ends somewhat like that of Crusoe. Even though he is happy with his state after returning home from the exile, Crusoe wants to go back to his island just to see it. On the other hand, Gulliver is not glad to be back home. What is more, he cannot stand humans, who all look like Yahoos to him. When the antisocial Gulliver "returns to the stable to live with the horses, rejecting his wife and family at the end of the fourth book, Swift portrays a good man destroyed by the corruption of a world gone mad" (Stubblefield and Categno 154). To put it differently, when Gulliver at the end of his travels wants to go back to the land of Houyhnhnms, Swift emphasizes his critique of the society. It is exactly society that caused Gulliver to feel purposeless in his life. Just like Crusoe, Gulliver becomes aware that he can find his purpose and true self far away from society.

6. Quest for Identity in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

According to Sam Bluefarb, modern novel of escape starts with *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. Moreover, Twain's novel is one of the first modern American quest romances (13). As mentioned before, Huck does not have a real family. His father is not respected in St. Petersburg, a town where the story takes place. He is infamous for drinking and not being around to raise his child. Therefore, Widow Douglas adopts Huck Finn and, together with her sister Miss Watson, ensures that he learns to read. Huck has difficulties with attending the school and complying with the rules of adults (D'Amassa 1). After his father shows up and locks him up in a cabin, Huck decides to escape from him and Widow Douglas. Sam Bluefarb suggests that "Huck's foremost reason for wanting to escape is the high incidence of violence around him" (13). Naturally, he is sick of his father's maltreatment and he feels threatened. This brings us to the conclusion that Huck Finn, just like Crusoe and Gulliver, does not escape in order to travel, but to find his identity and understand the meaning of his life.

Huck ends up running into Jim, Miss Watson's slave, who has escaped after hearing Miss Watson's intentions to sell him and thus separate him from his family. Therefore, Jim decides to escape to slave-free states and acquire enough money to buy his family. According to Railton, "from the moment that Huck, running away from Pap and the Widow, agrees to help Jim run away from Miss Watson, the story is organized as a quest for freedom" (57). However, there is something else to this story. Huck's decision to help Jim eventually leads to Huck's development as an individual, since he realizes that he has been doing the right thing by helping Jim. Later on, he also becomes aware of his own quest.

Huck and Jim float down the river, in the direction of the slave-free states. Together they experience a couple of adventures. In one of them they encounter the Duke and the Dauphin, who claim to be royals. Huck Finn instantly realizes that they are frauds and tries to trick them. However, they seem to outsmart him as they sell Jim to a local farmer (D'Amassa 1). At that moment, Huck starts questioning himself whether he did the right thing by helping Jim so far. What is more, he has doubts about saving him now that he is in serious trouble:

> . . . thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me, all the time, in the day, and in the night –time, sometimes, moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a-floating

> along, talking, and singing, and laughing. . . . I saved him by telling the men we had smallpox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the *only* one he's got now. (208)

From this quote we can see that Huck Finn becomes more rational as a result of his adventures with Jim. He starts to regard Jim as his friend and remembers all the adventures they have been through; "Huck discovers only at the moment of crisis that he simply can't do what his conscience commands" (Peltason 69), so he disobeys society's values and helps Jim. He is unsure whether he should act according to society's desires or his own ones. During his and Jim's journey, Huck realizes that Jim is human just as him. Therefore, his conscience keeps him from turning in Jim. Bluefarb offers a similar interpretation:

> Not only do his choices gradually become more moral, but they become more effective in the manner in which they affect him. Within Huck a struggle ensues between society's conscience and his heart, a struggle that begins in those dim, barely conscious areas, but gradually rises to the surface of conscious moral choice as Huck floats farther downriver. (21)

Huck's choices grow to be moral; they are a consequence of all the adventures he and Jim have faced together. Therefore, Huck saves Jim, but also himself, since he is now aware of the cruelty of the society. Initially, he is not escaping "from all of the hypocrisies, cruelties, and hyper-sentimentalities that accumulate" (Bluefarb 14) in the society. The escape only helps him to realize that he is running away from the society he is disillusioned with. According to Stephen Railton,

> Freedom for Huck becomes an intellectual condition: it depends on reaching a conclusion rather than a place, on attaining an insight into the inadequacy of his culture's values and arriving at a belief in the value, even the superior authority of his own personal convictions. (58)

Therefore, Huck Finn's quest does not signify finding freedom for Jim. On the contrary, it means that Huck is trying to free himself. The adventures just help him to realize what kind of society he lives in. Obviously, the values of the society and peoples' "comic-awful behaviour" (Peltason 58) he encounters during his journey turn out to be more than unpleasant for Huck Finn. Eventually, after Jim is set free and his journey with Huck is completed, Huck wants to escape from the society surrounding him once again. When everything settles, he wants to "light out for the Territory ahead of the rest," to flee from Tom's Aunt Sally who wants to

adopt him. He does not want to be "sivilized" (Twain 281), meaning that he does not want to be a part of the society which he saw through. Instead, he continues to seek for his place in the world. As Bluefarb explains, "Huck’s only alternative is to light out once again for the territory, not only of the land but of the heart" (19). Namely, in the same way as Crusoe and Gulliver, Huck is also ready to embark on another adventure just to become free of society.

7. Quest for Identity in *The Catcher in the Rye*

> Huck is the most influential narrator in American literature, and we hear his voice again wherever a plain-speaking outsider—frequently but not always an adolescent, usually but not always a male—unspools an observant, episodic, roughly autobiographical, comically judging, and often heartbreaking account of our flawed adult world. Sometimes the echoes are close and clear, as in *The Catcher in the Rye*, where Holden Caulfield's nonstandard English, his lavish improvisatory lies, his penchant for running away, his alert eye for phoniness, and his intuitive rejection of all forms of brutality combine to make us feel the indebtedness to Twain is deliberate and programmatic. (Peltason 64)

There is a clear connection between Huck and Holden. Both are young adults who start an adventure in order to realize who they are. At the beginning of the novel, we find out that Holden has been kicked out of Pencey Prep school. Therefore, he "undertakes a journey of initiation in the heart of the [New York] city in order to become aware of the ambiguity of modern life, and of his own identity" (Ghafoori and Ghasemi 74). Similarly to Huck, Holden's motive for escape is to find his true self.

After he settles in a hotel in New York, Holden experiences a couple of adventures. He interprets each event in a negative way, judging people and feeling lost. He constantly yearns for his childhood, when his brother Allie was still alive and everything was perfect. That is why he sneaks into his own apartment to visit his little sister Phoebe. According to Svogun, he is actually longing for "someone to consult, confide in, and who will offer predictions and advice" (111):

> I started thinking how old Phoebe would feel if I got pneumonia and died. It was a childish way to think, but I couldn't stop myself. She'd feel pretty bad if something like that happened. She likes me a lot. I mean she's quite fond of me. She really is. Anyway, I couldn't get that off my mind, so finally what I figured I'd do, I figured I'd better sneak home and see her, in case I died and all. I had my door key with me and all, and I figured what I'd do, I'd sneak in the apartment, very quiet and all, and just sort of chew the fat with her for a while. (Salinger 140–41)

It seems that Holden is looking for a place which will help him find his identity. For this reason, he visits his sister in order to bring back memories of his childhood. However,

because he finds himself in a big city where things change on a daily basis, it is inevitable that Holden changes, too. It is very hard for him to think about his childhood, so he loses the sense of time and place. This causes him to lose his identity (Ghafoori and Ghasemi 78). He cannot find a place for himself in society and tries to escape from it:

> Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around – nobody big, I mean – except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff – I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and *catch* them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be. (Salinger 156)

Holden's imagination, that he shares with Phoebe, tells us a lot about his identity. Undoubtedly, he is lost and unconfident. According to some interpretations, Holden's depression is caused by his sense identity loss (Ghafoori and Ghasemi 75). Since he does not find a place for himself in society, he envisions himself as a catcher in the rye who catches children playing in a rye field on the edge of a cliff and saves them from falling off the edge. From that, one can conclude that he wants to be of some help to people and have a purpose in his life.

Afterwards, Holden takes his sister to a carousel ride and his story suddenly ends. It is only insinuated that he went home, got sick, and is preparing to go to school next fall. His final words, "Don't ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody" (Salinger 192), reveal to us that he shared his story with somebody and now regrets it (Privitera 205). Similarly to the quest of Crusoe, Gulliver, and Huck Finn, Holden's quest is open-ended. Even though they all realize what they were unconsciously searching for, all these characters want to continue their search. At the end of each novel, the main characters allude to another quest for self, which would be conscious and deliberate this time.

8. Gender and Adventure Fiction

From the early beginnings of quest romances, women-characters played less important roles. Whereas men dominated the field of adventure, women rarely appeared as main protagonists. According to Don D'Amassa, "Women were generally plot elements rather than actual participants in the story. They were there to be menaced and defended, captured and rescued or to provide someone to whom the hero could explain things" (147). It follows that generally men appear as questers, namely, heroes in the form of a main character. The absence of female characters from the quest romances is also evident in the detachment of that genre from the sentimental tradition. According to Fiedler,

> the rise of the American [quest] genre [was] not merely . . . a reaction to the formal realism of everyday life espoused by the early English novel, but also . . . a rebellion against the ethos of sexual polarity pervading the countless tales of love and seduction that followed Richardson’s achievement. (qtd. in Boone 961)

In other words, quest romances were designed to be a reaction to tales of love and seduction preceding them and the accompanying social standards:

> The writer of quest-romance, in contrast to the general romancer, dealt by definition with a world largely void of women or normal social regulations, a world in which the male exploration of sea or desert provided a subject ideally suited for the novelist interested in working outside the thematic strictures of the literary marriage tradition. (Boone 963)

According to Boone, not only did the quest writers alienate themselves from the feminine roles and themes dominant in the earlier, sentimental fiction but they also "sidestepped the social and literary problematic of the sexes by imagining worlds without women" (965). In that way, writers of quest narratives kept away from discussing the gendered society. They did that by abandoning "the subject of *realistic* romantic involvement altogether" (Boone 965). By refusing to include female protagonists, they tried to bring a male individual into focus and created womanless worlds dominated by male individuals. The male protagonists in search for their freedom had to be devoid of female companions as women would only interfere with their quest and bring in complex gender relationships. Moreover, "the freedom sought by the male protagonist 'on the run' from society" also signified "an

adolescent avoidance of mature love, as epitomized in marital responsibility, and of adult identity" (Boone 962).

Defoe, Swift, Twain, and Salinger also created womanless worlds to highlight the "male psychological development" and "to represent a minority deviating from a popular tradition in which women, courtship and marriage are very much in evidence" (Boone 961). Indeed, Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck Finn, and Holden are described as independent male questers, who in their search for freedom and identity avoid any type of love and devotion to women.

According to Daemrich, [narratives of adventure and quest] "are structured around the adventures of the male quester who searches, discovers, strives to possess and manipulate, or loses a paradise with strongly feminine attributes" (214). Not only do these four novels "integrate a male-initiated adventure and quest with the longing for paradisal bliss" (Daemmrich 214) but they are also united by the fact that their authors are male. Moreover, if we observe the seventeenth-century reading public, we can arrive at an interesting conclusion:

> There was also a very noticeable divergence based on gender, with women, for example, emerging as the predominant readers of romance novels and detective stories while men were more likely to be interested in explicit action, sports, military, and crime fiction. The "penny dreadfuls" of Victorian England were read by both sexes, but shortly after the turn of the last century the era of the pulp magazine began, and separate titles catering to male-oriented adventure stories soon emerged. (D'Amassa 146)

According to this opinion, the early tales that involved men protagonists were more likely to be read by male readers. In other words, novelists were focusing on creating an appealing male hero to lure male readers, which resulted in greater popularity of their novels.

Later on, with the beginning of the nineteenth century, this trend seems to have continued. That century brought the era of pulp magazines in which the early male-oriented quest stories were published. Similarly, in the 1920s and 1930s, pulp magazines swarmed with romantic stories and adventure tales. Whereas the former targeted female audience, the latter were, naturally, oriented toward male readers (D'Amassa 146).

9. Social Critique in Quest Narratives

The four quest romances previously mentioned are not just adventure tales; they also present their authors' critique of the society of their time as all of them intertwine adventurous journeys and serious social topics and issues. In *Catastrophe and Development in the Adventure Romance* Cara Murray explains that the eighteenth century is characteristic of the pace of modernization on a global scale. The prompt modernization that occurred during that era brought changes of the ideas and opinions of the society by introducing modern concepts such as "consumerism and professionalism" (150). These changes and the concomitant social phenomena, including corruption, were exposed by the novelists of that time.

In the beginning of *Robinson Crusoe*, for instance, Defoe criticizes "the ambitions of youth" (D'Amassa 204). He illustrates this when his hero, Crusoe, disobeys his parents' wishes and chases his dreams:

> My father, who was very ancient, had given me a competent share of learning, as far as house-education and a country free school generally go, and designed me for the law; but I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea; and my inclination to this led me so strongly against the will, nay, the commands of my father, and against all the entreaties and persuasions of my mother and other friends. . . . (Defoe 1-2)

Later on, Defoe attacks the idea of "economically motivated expansionist enterprise," which is seen through Crusoe's exploitation of worldwide resources (Young 36-7). Moreover, it is also apparent in Crusoe's observations that most of the islands are "English" (Defoe 331) or Spanish colonies: "I considered that if this land was the Spanish coast, I should certainly, one time or other, see some vessel pass or repass one way or other" (140). Additionally, the second part of Defoe’s story turns into an interpretation of human nature (Novak 49). Defoe, among many adventures, finds his way to give us an insight into his point of view on the current situation in England. He believes that land is being exploited and that Englishmen should question their idea of colonizing the whole world. Moreover, he suggests that people have become strangers to one another due to the drastic social changes that occurred. This is portrayed when Crusoe and Friday catch sight of an English ship and discover prisoners on their island:

> "Our case, sir," said he, "is too long to tell you while our murderers are so near us; but in short, sir, I was commander of that ship – my men have mutinied

> against me; they have been hardly prevailed on not to murder me, and, at last, have set me on shore in this desolate place, with these two men with me – one my mate, the other a passenger – where we expected to perish, believing the place to be uninhabited. . ." . (Defoe 327)

Furthermore, Defoe criticizes human behavior of his time, showing that Englishmen were ready to kill anyone for profit, even one of their own kind. Moreover, he shows that the desire to conquer the whole world has taken its toll on humankind:

> Gulliver naively lays bare the social and cultural degradation, political corruption, brutality, squalor, waste, and sheer human misery that swarm forth from that ethical morass which Swift identified with modern Europe: shameless indulgence of luxury, vanity, and pride; economically, politically, and socially sanctioned devotion to blind and unbridled self-interest; the ruthless pursuit of wealth and power by the individual, the party, the corporation, and the state. (Mackie 111)

Swift, just like Defoe, provides a commentary on the social changes, thus criticizing "luxury, political corruption, and absurd philosophies" (Markley 457). We can additionally juxtapose Swift to Defoe as Swift also indicates that society is behaving in a dishonest way, referring to "European exploration, and exploitation, in the South Seas" (457). All of this points at Swift's critique of English politicians and their influence on the society of his time. In his journey to the country of the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver describes how content he is far away from England because:

> . . . [here were no] politicians, wits, splenetics, tedious talkers, controvertists, ravishers, murderers, robbers, virtuosos; no leaders, or followers, of party and faction; no encouragers to vice, by seducement or examples; no dungeon, axes, gibbets, whipping-posts, or pillories; no cheating shopkeepers or mechanics. . . . (Swift 354)

In addition to the satiric attack on politicians, Swift uses his hero as a tool for mocking humankind. He does this by glorifying the behavior and ideas of Houyhnhnms. At the same time, Swift represent humans as having the least degree of importance:

> I freely confess, that all the little knowledge I have of any value, was acquired by the lectures I received from my [horse] master, and from hearing the

> discourses of him and his friends; to which I should be prouder to listen, than to dictate to the greatest and wisest assembly in Europe. (Swift 356)

By stating the inessentiality of society, Swift wants to induce the readers to make a shift in their behavior for the sake of living in a better world (DeGategno and Stubblefield 153).

Similarly, Twain also criticizes society and its morals. This is confirmed by the fact that his novel was "the fifth most banned novel in schools and libraries" (D'Amassa 2). That was mainly caused by the fact that Twain freely demonstrated "the social division that existed within the United States at the time" ("The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" 388). Twain employed the word "nigger" over two hundred times throughout the novel, which confirms that the issue of race and slavery was central to it (Kaye 13).

There is no doubt that Twain's own experiences influenced his novel; he admitted "that some of his inspiration came from the false image of black culture that he saw on the minstrel stage" (Hildebrand 151). By criticizing racism, Twain was trying to accentuate morally wrong social behavior. He did this through the character of Huck:

> So I kneeled down. But the words wouldn't come. Why wouldn't they? It warn't no use to try and hide it from Him. Nor from *me,* neither. I knowed very well why they wouldn't come. It was because I warn't square; it was because I was playing double. I was letting *on* to give up sin, but away inside of me I was holding to the biggest one of all. I was trying to make my mouth *say* I would do the right thing and the clean thing, and go and write to that nigger's owner and tell where he was; but deep down in me I knowed it was a lie – and He knowed it. (Twain 207)

Huck's conscience convinced him not to write to Miss Watson and reveal Jim's whereabouts. Deep in his heart, Huck knew that Miss Watson would sell Jim to some plantation down the river. As a result, Jim would have been separated from his family and that is something what Huck did not approve of. Furthermore, through the character of Huck Finn Twain offered a way for society to overcome its racist attitudes, just like Huck did when he helped Jim:

> We had Jim out of the chains in no time, and when Aunt Polly and Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally found out how good he helped the doctor nurse Tom, they made a heap of fuss over him, and fixed him up prime, and give him all he wanted to eat, and a good time, and nothing to do. And we had him up to the

> sick-room; and had a high talk; and Tom give him forty dollars for being prisoner for us so patient…. (Twain 280)

Twain's novel advocated not only that people conquer racist attitudes dominant in that time but also that they start regarding black people as humans, as Huck does.

Likewise, Jerome David Salinger offers a critique of society through the character of Holden:

> If you were only six years old, you could get liquor at Ernie's, the place as so dark and all, and besides, nobody cared how old you were. You could even be a dope fiend and nobody'd care. I was surrounded by jerks. I'm not kidding. (Salinger 77)

Holden is full of resentment; he is sick of hypocritical society and tries to distance himself from it. He criticizes each and every character throughout the novel, always finding something wrong with them:

> It was one of the worst schools I ever went to. It was full of phonies. And mean guys. You never saw so many mean guys in your life. For instance, if you were having a bull session in somebody's room, and somebody wanted to come in, nobody'd let them in if they were dome dopey, pimply guy. Everybody was locking their door when somebody wanted to come in. (Salinger 151)

This quote explains why Holden runs away from his current school. It also shows us how unsatisfied Holden is with the behavior of boys his age.

Just like Defoe, Salinger discusses the ambitions of youth. In contrast to Defoe, he depicts how ambitions can become disoriented when young people are lost. In Salinger's novel, society deserves to be criticized because it takes the wrong direction. Due to prompt global changes and modernization, people have started to lose interaction with each other and are only concerned with themselves (Ghafoori and Ghasemi 74). This results in the loss of identity. According to some opinions, identity crisis is typical of modern urban life (Ghafoori and Ghasemi 75). In that sense Salinger is actually trying to criticize the recently developed, yet faulty, lifestyle of society. His intention is to warn readers not to fall into "fragmented modern civilization" (87) in which one can lose one's identity.

Conclusion

To summarize, *Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver's Travels, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* and *The Catcher in The Rye* are typical representatives of the quest romance, the genre that developed in the eighteenth century, the period marked by a growth in the reading public and an increase and variety of the novelistic production. All of these novels center on a protagonist who undergoes a physical adventure which ultimately turns into an identity quest. The more adventures the protagonist experiences, the more he learns about himself and the world around him. Moreover, the more adventurous life he lives, the more self-determined he becomes, resolved to live his life according to his own standards.

In tune with the narrative formula of the quest romance, all these narratives focus on the male heroes and their psychological development and are deprived of female characters and elements such as love, courtship, and marriage. Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck Finn, and Holden all leave home, break the social ties with their family or people they are close to, try to find their way in society and search for their own identity.

An early model of the quest romance is exemplified by Robinson Crusoe as he experiences peculiar circumstances which leave him alone on a deserted island that initiate his adventures and his quest. Another example is Lemuel Gulliver who faces out-of-the-ordinary adventures and is hungry for more. On the other hand, Huckleberry Finn deals with a quite different, yet difficult, quest of freeing the escaped slave Jim and himself from a morally wrong society. Lastly, the quest pattern is also demonstrated by the modern protagonist Holden Caulfield who unconsciously goes through a series of adventures just to find his place in society.

Robinson Crusoe’s quest principally starts because of his desire to travel the world. He sets his heart on travels despite his parents’ wishes. When he ends up alone on an island, he feels blessed and realizes that he feels complete far away from society. Therefore, his quest turns out to be an identity quest during which he learns a lot about himself and the world around him. Similarly, Lemuel Gulliver feels an urge to travel the world. He too has a family, but feels happier away from it. After numerous adventures, he becomes aware that he is looking for his own place in society, just like Crusoe. His last journey in the Houyhnhnm land brings him to a conclusion that he cannot stand the company of humans. He finds humankind obnoxious and ends up living with horses. Like Crusoe and Gulliver, Twain's Huckleberry Finn does not seem to fit into society and runs away from people surrounding him. As he

extends help to a runaway slave Jim, his escape turns out to be both an identity quest and a quest for Jim’s freedom. With time, Huck Finn becomes conscious that he is actually looking for his own freedom from society and its morals that he does not approve of. Likewise, Sallinger's hero Holden Caulfield is also a young adult who runs away in order to find his place in society. He feels lonesome and incomplete while in the company of people. For this reason, he sets out on a quest for his identity, trying to fit into society.

While the adventures of Crusoe, Gulliver, and Huck Finn take place in a greater world, Holden's adventure is set in an environment which is known to him. All four protagonists undergo a psychological adventure besides the physical one – an adventure that takes place within their minds. Furthermore, Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck Finn, and Holden are all ordinary human beings, common people who seek for their own identity outside of society, yet feel lonely when they find freedom. With time, all four protagonists become aware that they are trying to find their self and understand their purpose in society. However, since their standards do not match the ones that society displays, they cannot find themselves either. After all the adventures they experience, they come to a conclusion that they do not fit into society and that they must continue with their quest. Accordingly, neither of these characters' quests leads to a closure. At the end of their journeys, Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck, and Holden realize that their search for identity is far from over. Consequently, they want to go back to the places where they feel free, and their adventures are to be continued.

Another similarity between these four novels is their length. Robinson Crusoe's adventures extend to three hundred ninety-two pages and Gulliver's adventures are divided in four parts, altogether containing three hundred eighty-three pages. Similarly, Huck Finn's adventures are described across two hundred eighty-one page, whereas the adventures of the modern quester Holden Caulfield comprise one hundred ninety-two pages.

Additionally, Defoe, Swift, Twain, and Salinger employ the first-person narrator to describe the protagonist's experience and they all provide a critique of the society of their time. Defoe and Swift use their protagonists to address the issues specific for the English society of their time such as imperialism, corruption, and dishonesty. Similarly, Twain and Salinger expose the hypocrisy and corruption in the American society. Whereas Twain criticizes morally wrong behavior of society and its racist attitudes, Salinger addresses the self-concerned materialism of mid-twentieth-century American society. Dissatisfied with society, Crusoe, Gulliver, Huck Finn, and Holden become social outcasts, reminding us that one must think critically of society in order not to lose one's identity.

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