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Re-imagining hostility as hospitality: Studying immigration through Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

Chander Shekhar

Chander Shekhar is an Assistant Professor of English at the Department of English and Foreign Languages, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Ghaziabad (UP). His research interests include historical fiction, memory studies, reader-response, the role of the reader, narrative techniques, utopian studies, dystopian studies, protopia, violence, and technology. His articles have appeared in *Forum for World Literature Studies*, *Pertanika: Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, and *Drishti: The Sight*. Apart from this, he has also published some book chapters.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8482-6405>

Abstract:

This research examines Mark Twain's novel A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (1889) in the context of security studies. Hank Morgan, the protagonist, is an immigrant playing games to counter hostility with appropriate stratagems for his security/survival in medieval England. After becoming "The Boss", his desire to civilize Camelot is less motivated by social welfare and more to dominate for power and comfort as a ruthless colonizer. By dwelling on the contributions of African/Mexican immigrants in America, I compare and contrast what contributions Hank could have made, and what he has done by misusing power in medieval England. To re-imagine the concept of hostility as hospitality to design a better world, this article also ponders upon the question of illegal immigration, e.g. why the presence of illegal immigrants has been frowned upon in society, and the scope of their future assimilation in the present scenario of global terrorism. Through the narrative of the present (Mexicans) and past immigrants (e.g. Africans/Hank), it aims to demonstrate how far we have come and how far we have yet to go to achieve a more hospitable world in this hostile global environment for immigrants in the future.

Introduction

Although the critical methodology of security studies is not an unprecedented step in literary studies, no such research has been carried out to study Mark Twain's novel *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) from a security perspective. With

evolving nuances in form and format, the concept of “security” creates an urge to probe its complex transformations over time. Paul D. Williams, in his book, *Security Studies* (2008, p. 5), defines security as “most commonly associated with the alleviation of threats to cherished values; especially those which, if left unchecked, threaten the survival of a particular referent object (*Individual/group/state/environment*) in the near future” (emphasis added). These “referent objects” pose certain questions: whose security, who is to be prioritised, whose values are threatened, and by what or whom? However, the question is how to recognize groups or organizations that constitute a threat, and how to diminish that threat. Often, power is seen as a route to security, which relies on a commitment to mutual survival rather than mutual destruction. In the present scenario, the concept of security has changed and will continue to change, e.g. “in the 1970s, the concept was expanded to include international economics . . . resources, environmental and demographics issues” (Matthews, 2011, p. 64). These referent objects demonstrate how salient, significant and controversial the issue has become with the proliferation of its facets over time. However, this study further unravels different shades of security to understand some relevant questions, such as, “what is security? How can we assess security? Are there degrees of security? Is it an objective concept or a subjective one?” (Deguat, 2015, p. 1).

As delineated above, the idea of security is about the alleviation of threats to cherished values. By taking a security studies approach, I focus on what makes a society hostile towards immigrants while preserving traditional values from external threats and taking necessary actions to diminish them. Different degrees of security depend on different types of threats and the actions required to deal with them. Indeed, security is a subjective concept in nature, which people define each in their way, since one person sees something as a threat, whereas others may not see it in the same manner. To demonstrate the complexity of security as a concept, it is necessary to address some interlinked questions: “Is it related only to states, or is security also related to individual human beings? Is security synonymous with survival?” (Deguat, 2015, p. 1).

Undoubtedly, security and survival are related, but they are not synonymous. Security is about cherishing values in the absence of life-determining threats, while survival is an existential condition. The security of a nation can also be jeopardized by even a single person belonging to a different nation state. In Twain’s *Connecticut Yankee*, Hank Morgan, the protagonist, as a means of security/survival in Arthur’s England, declares himself a magician. This article critically engages with the narrative of an

American migrant (Hank), who migrates to sixth-century medieval England in reverie from 19th-century America, where he faces a hostile reception. By keeping the payoff in mind as a shrewd player, Hank counters the hostility unleashed on him with appropriate stratagems. His knowledge saves him, earning him the title of “The Boss” in the society. However, in the beginning, he was deprived of such blandishments, apparent by the fact of his death sentence.

Through Hank’s narrative, I intend to reveal the colonial gaze of an erstwhile immigrant, who, once fighting for his security/survival, now intends to dominate Camelot’s people. He has brought all the modern facilities of 19th-century America into sixth-century England to make life better, but he has not been devoted to his project sincerely. He believes that the society is hard-minded and hostile towards his idea of civilization and modernity, to obscure his selfish desires for power and comfort. To highlight the flaws in Hank’s civilization, it is crucial to see to what extent it is relegated from what it actually stands for. The Oxford English Dictionary defines “civilization” as “The state or condition of being civilized; human cultural, social, and Intellectual development when considered to be advanced and progressive” (OED). In contrast, Hank’s desire to civilize Camelot through the “techno-political vision” (Lieberman, 2010, p. 64) of 19th-century America is less motivated by social welfare and more to dominate it. Twain seeks the techno-politics model (pure) to achieve a better society, but Hank departs from the same to become a practical politician (impure) of 19th-century America, who brought enormous violence (civil war) to society. He acts like a modern tyrant (Hitler), who employs modern technology to bring tremendous violence to anyone who stands in his path.

By setting the novel in the past, Twain traces the tradition of hostility towards immigrants and their response to their host country. This research portrays how far we have come from Hank’s medieval England and how far we have yet to go to achieve a more hospitable world in this hostile global environment for immigrants in the future. It also focuses on the most neglected part (immigrants’ contributions) of security studies, e.g. the contributions Hank could have made as an immigrant in medieval England, and how he brought tremendous violence by misusing his power. He witnessed the onslaught of the American Civil War (1861–1865); nevertheless, he did not mend his ways. He becomes a ruthless colonizer after gaining power and the title of “The Boss” in medieval England. Hank presents a negative picture of an immigrant, and, how he is different from African/Mexicans immigrants, despite belonging to 19th-century America. Drawing this

argument as a focal point of this study, I shall compare and contrast immigrants' responses to their host country. Through Hank's narrative, one can begin to see a delineation in the saga of hostility faced by immigrants from medieval England (Hank) to modern America (Africans/Mexicans), to re-imagine the concept of hostility as hospitality in designing a better world for immigrants. It also deals with questions such as the differences between present (Mexicans) and past immigrants (Africans/Hank), and the question of illegal immigration in the present scenario of global terrorism. It tries to answer why their presence has been frowned upon in society, and the scope of their future assimilation in America.

Hank's employment of novel strategies to counter hostility

The hostility towards immigrants (like Hank) has a microcosmic connotation because such behaviour towards immigrants unveils the saga of human reactions towards something unknown, alien and strange. However, the other thread of this narrative, which this study attempts to scrutinize, is the contributions of immigrants as an overlooked concept in security studies. Hank represents America in medieval England, and his time travel from 19th-century America to sixth-century England freezes him in the identity of an immigrant. When Hank realizes he is in an unknown environment, he concludes, "if it was still the nineteenth-century and I was among lunatics and couldn't get away, I would presently boss that asylum or . . . really the sixth-century . . . I would boss the whole country inside of three months" (Twain, 1889, p. 11).

The king decrees the execution of Hank because he appears to be a foreigner in the way he dresses. It displays his otherness and betrays him as an outsider. The question of identity also comes under consideration since "Identity is inherently unstable, contingent and a site of constant competition, and security defines who we are the others from whom we need protection" (Williams, 2008, p. 62). Therefore, Hank's presence can jeopardize the security of the nation, in which his clothes play a vital role, evident in the opening conversation between Hank and the knight. It results in intimidation, hostility, abduction and attempted murder. The knight, in iron armour, with a shield, sword and a long spear, comes towards Hank:

"Fair sir, will ye just?" said this fellow.

"Will which?"

"Will ye try a passage of arms for lady or land or for—"

“What are you giving me?” I said. “Get along back to your circus, or I’ll report you.” (Twain, 1889, p. 4)

Then he steps back “a couple of hundred yards and then come rushing at me [...] his long spear pointed straight ahead” (Twain, 1889, p. 4) to kill Hank. Here, Hank’s verbal power meets the physical assertion of power. This conversation demonstrates how the failure of complete dialogue concludes with violence.

When Hank and King Arthur go for an adventure in ordinary attire, they are taken captive. In Arthur’s England, the law “doth not require the claimant to prove ye are slaves, it requireth you to prove ye are not” (Twain, 1889, p. 209). The same laws persisted in the South even after 1300 years, where many people who could not prove themselves free were sold. Through Hank and Arthur, slavery artistically becomes visible in medieval England to denounce its existence in America. In medieval England, Twain presents white slaves who have attained their freedom. While in America, black slaves could not achieve their freedom even after thirteen hundred years because they were waiting for a white liberator to free them. Unlike Hank, black people (as immigrants) could not muster the courage to stand against their opponent. Twain argues that slavery is “a type of thinking that is reflected throughout the Middle Ages, with some manifestations extending even into the nineteenth century” (Killion, 2019, p. 50). Through the portrayal of white slaves, Twain puts the white race into the blacks’ shoes to make them sensible of the dehumanizing ethos of slavery.

Apart from this, the impulse of culture and counterculture is also visible in Merlin, the magician, who represents superstition and the Old World, while Hank represents the magic of science and civilization in England. Therefore, there kindles a rivalry between them. In medieval England, the monarchy and the Church are the predominant interacting units to rule and protect the state. In contrast, Hank’s declaration of himself as a magician threatens royalty and demonstrates his potential to wipe out life from the earth. The fear of being killed prompted him to contrive a strategy to bring calamity through an eclipse when he says, “If everybody about here was so honestly and sincerely afraid of Merlin’s pretending magic . . . a superior man like me ought to be shrewd enough to contrive some way to take advantage” (Twain, 1889, p. 23). The strategy to bring the calamity through an eclipse is a contingent plan which shows his calibre to use the knowledge of the event for his security/survival. Hank plays games by keeping in mind the payoff, and smartly counters the hostility unleashed on him with appropriate stratagems. He says, “I might turn out all my attention to the circumstances

of the present moment . . . to make the most out of them that could be made” (Twain, 1889, p. 11). He knows very well that his death will be inevitable if he fails to convince the people about his magic.

Hank contextualizes and historicizes his pseudo act of performing an eclipse by corresponding it with an act of Columbus. When he says, “how Columbus, or Cortez, or one of those people, played an eclipse as a saving trump once, on some savages, and I saw my chance. I could play it myself” (Twain, 1889, p. 25). Hank divulges Columbus’s attitude towards Native Americans, who have been seen as savages and gullible. This act hints at his discreet behaviour in dealing with the same situation in England since Arthur’s people are like the Native Americans. After becoming “The Boss”, Hank’s desires for comfort and power become fatal to his determination to colonize the country by bringing modernity and civilization for a better future. His supercilious attitude towards the people of Camelot reveals his colonial outlook, where being a civilized person with a touch of scientific knowledge and temperament makes him superior amongst the superstitious people.

In Hank’s colonial gaze, everything outside of what he considers as civilization and civilized seems to be wild, and the people who inhabit that space are seen as animals. He argues that “There were people, too; brawny men, with long, coarse, uncombed hair that hung down over their faces and made them look like animals” (Twain, 1889, p. 8). The ruling order of the state reduces these people to the status of animals. Although the human and animal divide narrows in a domestic space where they live side by side, it is unbridgeable in King Arthur’s court. The King and the nobility eat food and fling bones towards dogs, which causes a commotion they usually enjoy. This incident corresponds to the disorder and chaos prevalent in Arthur’s court. Thus, by juxtaposing people’s reckless behaviour and untameable dogs, Twain shows the very thin line that divides animals and these people. Without education and civilization, such animalism and barbarity are not something untoward for medieval society. Hank can make England a prosperous nation; however, his desire to impose civilization corresponds to his longing to dominate rather than bring order for social welfare.

Hank’s idea of security is synonymous with survival. Despite the peril, he bestows the benefits of his knowledge on uncivilized people. Conspicuous in the civilization he wants to establish, he inevitably demolishes it. He plays games through acquired scientific and mathematical knowledge for his security when he utters, “Go back and tell the king that at that hour . . . I will blot out the sun, and he shall never shine again

. . . and the peoples of the earth shall famish and die, to the last man” (Twain, 1889, p. 26). As a shrewd player, Hank has made a clever decision from the collection of choices. In contrast, his counter player, Merlin is oblivious to the charade Hank has created to blot out the sun. Hank’s power is visible when he utters, “I was in one of the most grand attitudes I ever struck, with my arm stretched up pointing to the sun. it was a noble effect” (Twain, 1889, p. 29). Indeed, the eclipse event is known to him, so he avails himself of the knowledge and its benefit for his security. Hank’s pseudo-humanitarian persona to bring modernity and civilization to England is reflected “on the surface of his personality. But at the bottom, he enjoys the spectacle of acres of people” (Hansen, 1973, p. 64). These “acres of people” denote how Hank is more self-centred than a humanitarian.

The inter-nation conflict between Hank (America) and Merlin (England) shows that Hank has the upper hand in playing games judiciously when he says:

I knew that the only total eclipse of the sun in the first half of the sixth century occurred on the twenty-first of June, A.D. 528 o.s., and began at three minutes after twelve noon and I also knew that no total eclipse of the sun was due in what to me was the present year—i.e., 1879. (Twain, 1889, p. 10)

Hank’s strategy to befool Merlin is contingent on his magic because he knows he can outwit him easily; therefore, he sees his counterpart as harmless. His predominance has been proven by playing the game smartly when he vanquishes his counterparts neatly. Even the king beseeches him to spare the sun and life on earth. In contrast, Hank enjoys the fame that comes with it when he makes a bargain to spare the sun. When the sun’s rim becomes visible, “the assemblage broke loose with a vast shout and came pouring down like a deluge to smother me with blessings and gratitude” (Twain, 1889, p. 31). His Boss-like might becomes more evident when he proclaims “I was no shadow of a king . . . the king himself was the shadow. My power was colossal . . . there was another power that was a trifle stronger than both of us put together. That was the church” (Twain, 1889, pp. 37-38). Hank realizes that the Church is his biggest hurdle to his dream of achieving his desired state.

Problems arise for Hank when people crave to see another miracle, so to maintain his status, he proclaims he will blow up Merlin’s tower by fetching fires from heaven. The plan is not contrived for survival but to consolidate his reputation as a magician, on which his security/survival depends. To blow up the tower, he makes blasting powder

and “stowed the powder in the tower—dug stones out, on the inside, and buried the powder in the walls themselves” (Twain, 1889, p. 35). In contrast, Merlin draws an imaginary circle and burnt powder that emits smoke. With his same pompous show, Hank draws three passes in the air, then “there was an awful crash and that old tower leaped into the sky in chunks, along with a vast volcanic fountain of fire. . . There wasn’t a rag of his tower left” (Twain, 1889, p. 36). After beholding this incident, “a thousand acres of human beings groveling on the ground” (Twain, 1889, p. 36) in astonishment. In reaction to it, Hank remarks, “the tower episode solidified my power, and made it impregnable” (Twain, 1889, p. 37). Thus, Merlin’s reputation as a magician is annihilated by the tower’s demolition.

The same competitive spirit persists in the event of restoring the holy fountain. According to Merlin, the fountain has been occupied by a spirit; he uses incantation, burning powder, and various other means to get rid of that spirit. He has not used his eyes to inspect the well’s chamber since it is possible to restore the well naturally. Hank plays the game in the guise of a magician to restore the well by employing “pump, lead pipe, Greek fire, sheaves of big rockets . . . everything necessary for the stateliest kind of a miracle” (Twain, 1889, p. 127). With electric connections and light, he shows “a grand exhibition of extra posturing and gesturing” (Twain, 1889, p. 130). When he makes the water flow again, he describes people’s reactions, “You should have seen those acres of people throw themselves down in the water and kiss it; kiss it, and pet it, and fondle it, and talk to it as if it were alive” (Twain, 1889, p. 130). With the fountain, Hank’s reputation as a greater magician than Merlin has been restored. This scene demonstrates Hank as indomitable and benevolent at the same time. Thus, we can see how Hank plays games for his security/survival in medieval England.

Contributions and misappropriation: Immigrants’ response to their host country

Hank comes from a 19th-century American society built on the genocide of immigrants; nevertheless, he has overlooked the imperatives of immigrants’ contributions. Although he has the potential to make some significant contributions to medieval England, instead, he kills 25,000 people to achieve his desired state. And what is sacrificed in this process is humanity itself. The vast destruction has been caused by the sadistic mind (in the form of Hank) of 19th-century America, which has been dominant over thousands of people with the help of technology. In the battle of the Sand-belt, “Within ten short minutes after we had opened fire, armed resistance was totally annihilated, the campaign was ended,

we fifty-four were masters of England! Twenty-five thousand men lay dead around us” (Twain, 1889, p. 264). As a modern immigrant, Hank can bring modernity and civilization to England, but his path is based on bigotry and selfish desires. These 25,000 knights have been used as sacrificial victims to achieve Hank’s desired state. Similarly, America is also built on the genocide of African immigrants. Unlike Africans, Hank has the power of technology to dominate thousands of people, while being deprived of such power or will, black people become sacrificial victims for nation-building. Thus, it shows the difference between being powerful and powerless in a society, and how power operates at the whim of power mongers.

Hank’s colonizing attitude is ostensible in his desire to bring the “techno-political vision” of 19th-century America to sixth-century England by introducing the telephone, electricity, mail service, typewriter, newspaper, patent office, telegram, and so on. Some of the most conspicuous flaws in his character reveal his intentions – like why Hank had kept his civilization hidden from the eyes of the common people. If he was genuinely working for society, he could have shown what progress, like electricity, schools, factories, and newspapers can bring for the improvement of society. Also, why did he not illuminate that dark land of England? When he was just one step behind, “I stood with my hand on the cock, so to speak, ready to turn it on and flood the midnight world with light at any moment” (Twain, 1889, p. 48). He should have used electricity to enlighten that dark world of Camelot, instead of using it to kill thousands of people.

Hank withdraws because he has not been working for the welfare of society but rather to satiate his lust for power and luxury. He manipulates people by playing games to achieve his goals, which he demonstrates as a social project. Hank did not even try to convince the Church authorities because he believed that “no people in the world ever did achieve their freedom by goody-goody talk and moral suasion: it being immutable law that all revolutions that will succeed, must begin in blood” (Twain, 1889, p. 103). Therefore, without giving a second thought, he decides to wage a war, “I would take fifty assistants and stand up against the massed chivalry of the whole earth and destroy it” (Twain, 1889, p. 237). Had Hank been thinking about the welfare of society? He should have tried to convince the Church of his project.

Throughout the novel, the people of Arthur’s England are called “animals, children, savages or white Indians” (Hansen, 1973, p. 68). Hank’s civilization is not designed for society’s benefit but to fulfil his desire for comfort and power. His interest in technology arises from bodily comforts, “it is little conveniences that make the real

comfort of life” (Twain, 1889, p. 32). To achieve the same, he must “invent, contrive, create, reorganize things; set brain and hand to work, and keep them busy” (Dobski and Kleinrman, 2007, p. 33). Hank highlights the necessity of invention and comfort it brings when he discovers telephone lines at the Valley of Holiness, “I was breathing the breath of life again after long suffocation. I realized, then, what a creepy, dull, inanimate horror this land had been to me all these years” (Twain, 1889, p. 136). Subsequently, Hank’s lure to exert electric power is reflected in “the potential for networks to foster social progress is of lesser central to the novel than the allure of using power (electrical and otherwise) for personal gain” (Lieberman, 2010, p. 67). Jennifer Lieberman (2010, p. 64) reflects Hank’s penchant for power by stating that “The Yankee’s techno-political vision is federalist, not socialist . . . because it simultaneously distributes and centralizes power, incrementally improving social relations for many while allowing him . . . to remain in control at the center”. He directs technology as he wishes, evident in showing the progressive nature of technology to bring modernity and civilization, but whenever people confront him, he demonstrates the destructive nature of the same.

In the battle of the Sand-belt, the idea of misappropriation and contribution are further evident when he becomes mindless to such an extent that he “ignores what is good for his soul” (Lieberman, 2010, p. 64). It is ostensible in killing 25,000 people in a couple of minutes. Twain describes the horrific incident of electrocution:

He was near enough, now, for us to see him put out a hand, find an upper wire, then bend and step under it and over the lower one. Now he arrived at the first knight—and started slightly when he discovered him. He stood a moment—no doubt wondering why the other one didn’t move on; then he said, in a low voice, “Why dreamest thou here, good Sir Mar—” then he laid his hand on the corpse’s shoulder—and just uttered a little soft moan and sunk down dead. Killed by a dead man, you see—Killed by a dead friend, in fact. There was something awful about it. (Twain, 1889, p. 262)

Using electricity to kill people can be seen as an attempt “to master the form of annihilation” (Evans, 2021, p. 204). Such tremendous violence at an enormous scale was made possible by the modern mind of Hank Morgan since the people of Camelot were not aware of the power of technology and how it worked. However, killing people with an electric current is not very cost-effective, articulated in the following words:

You don’t want any ground-connection except the one through the negative brush. The other end of every wire must be brought back into the cave and

fastened independently, and without any ground-connection. Now, then, observe the economy of it . . . You are using no power, you are spending no money, for there is only one ground connection till those horses come against the wire. (Twain, 1889, p. 252)

In the battle of Sand-belt, Hank has generated havoc by unleashing violence at an enormous scale, made possible by the misuse of technology invented for social welfare.

For his brutal act of killing, he has been compared to the 20th-century dictator Hitler. Hank's "personality prefigures the careers and the personalities of the twentieth-century dictators" (Hansen, 1973, p. 67). Like Hitler, he also validates his acts in the name of the people, wherein, "The motto of Hitler's Germany—*Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer*—it was the people who came first . . . as the Yankee is inclined to do, and yet respond to actual persons with contempt, and hatred" (Hansen, 1973, p. 67). Like Hitler, Hank pursues his ideals in the name of the people to bring civilization and modernity. However, his liberalist project of a democratic utopia eventually turns into a fascist dystopia, "where sacrifices of people are about the disposability of human populations, those countless, nameless, and faceless victims, who experience violence" (Evans, 2018, p. 21). Hank does not want to become a part of the society; instead, he uses people to achieve his desired state at any cost, evident in the killing of thousands of people in the battle of the Sand-belt.

Apart from delineating Hank's various strategies to play games for his security/survival, this study also focuses on his contributions as an immigrant and what more they could have been if, instead of being selfish, he worked for the welfare of society. Hank was not known for his contributions, although he could bring modernity and civilization to medieval England. The question is not about what Hank was capable of but what he did when he could have made some significant contributions to medieval England. What Hank did with the people of Camelot was not something admirable but something that brought humiliation and denunciation. After getting power and prestige, Hank (an erstwhile immigrant) did not want to become a part of society; instead, he became "The Boss" to colonize Camelot.

A nation cannot prosper only from the contributions of its native peoples; if it were so, then America might not be the world's superpower today. Indeed, America is built on genocide, where people's sacrifice is imperative for nation-building. The institution of slavery supports the ideology of humans hunting humans to gain control and domination. The human hunting enterprise intends to demonstrate that "liberalism

was integral to the onset of the global slave trade, while its mission to spread civilization tied to a more enlightened vision of colonization, thereby introducing the very problem of race as a political category” (Evans, 2021, pp. 127-28), which Europeans tend to debunk in their consideration. However, “slavery was first tried with native Americans, but they could not be able to develop the self-perpetuating labor of slavery. In contrast, Africans were seen as more upgrade technologies than human beings” (Grove 13:20), to employ in the formation of nation-building. Therefore, Europeans moved to Africa to capture black people, and consequently, “around 12 million people relocated, and 2.4 million killed in transport, which is 1.7% of the global population, in an effort to settle America” (Grove 12:53).

A multicultural nation built on the sacrifices of immigrants is now more hostile towards them, “despite its history as an immigrant society, the United States has rarely shown new arrivals a welcome reception” (Hirschman, 2013, p. 38). Immigrants are seen as encroaching on the rights and opportunities of American citizens who once were immigrants themselves. The democratic model, which Hank wanted to establish in England by abolishing the monarchy, was drawn on the model of 19th-century America demystified by Jacques Ranciere in the following words, “Ideologues of the northern democracy are particularly hostile to democratic practices in their societies where outsiders not seen as deepening and broadening of democracy but as a threat to the social order” (qtd. in Friedman, 2012, p. 6). These words depict the corrupt nature of liberal democracy in America, where practical politicians had brought enormous violence. Indeed, black people were not seen as part of society but as a class that was always supposed to remain subservient to white people. They reveal that democracy in the North America was more about manipulating power, which only white people were supposed to exercise. In contrast, an ideal democracy facilitates power for powerless people without any discrimination. Here, the problem is not about being ignorant but about being powerless in a society dominated by the white class.

Black people have been foundational to America’s growth and economy. They endured a long history of brutal conditions for two centuries in Southern plantations and Northern factories to build its economy. Even the Social Security Act of 1930s neglected black workers, especially women, “As far back as 1870, 50 percent of black women were in the labor force compared to just 16.5 percent of white women” (Banerjee and Johnson 2020). Black workers faced employment barriers, even graduates were employed in occupations that did not require college degree. Against such an unjust system, there was

manifold activism: “the 1881 Atlanta Washerwomen Strike, the 1955-6 Montgomery Bus Boycott, the 1963 march on Washington for jobs and freedom, and the 2019 UAW General Motors Strike” (Banerjee and Johnson 2020). This series of demonstrations shows the long history of discrimination and the fight against such a system.

Although opportunities were severely restricted by oppressive institutions, blacks in the North invented at a significant scale, “from 1870 to 1940, black people living in the North were eight times more likely to be awarded a patent than black people living in the South” (Rothwell et al. 2020). The lack of resources and systematic racism had a huge effect on the black population in the South, which can be seen in the chasm that existed between the land of opportunity (North) and the land of exploitation (South). Further,

In states with heavy historical slave populations—such as Alabama, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, and Florida—patenting was much higher for Black people who were born there than patenting by residence. This suggests that these states were especially bad at providing practice opportunities, but many Black people born there achieved inventive success elsewhere after migrating. (Rothwell et al. 2020)

Almost, “87% of inventions were traced to people born in the United States, and 2.7% were invented by Black Americans—a larger share than nearly every immigrant group” (Rothwell et al. 2020). In order to honour black people’s contribution to US history, Black History Month (February) also known as African American History Month is celebrated every year. Carter G. Woodson is bestowed with an epithet – the father of Black History Month. Some famous contributors are Dr Daniel Hale Williams, who performed the world’s first successful heart surgery and Dr Rebecca Lee Crumpler, who was the first black woman to earn a medical degree. Williams founded the first non-segregated hospital (Provident Hospital) in Chicago. Lewis Latimer became an electronic engineer, who worked with Thomas Edison on improving lights. Granville Woods designed a communication system to distribute electricity to rail cars. There was an automated system for wheel lubrication invented by Elijah McCoy and an ironing board by Sarah Boone. Gerald Ford highlights the need to commemorate and “honor the too-often neglected accomplishment of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history” (Johnson 2022).

There have many attempts made by the government to harass black people; nevertheless, they contributed extensively in nation-building with their blood and sweat,

and chose to stay in America. In contrast, Mexicans, who were even given option of dual citizenship or to be contract workers, did not intend to become a part of the society. During the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), immigrants fled to the United States in order to evade political persecution, “In the year 1910 there were only about 20,000 migrants entering the United States yearly from Mexico that number rose to between 50,000 and 100,000 per year by 1920” (Greene 2017). They fulfilled the demand for cheap labour that arose after the massive increase in agricultural and manufacturing production. However, during the Great Depression (1929–1941), the government started a drive to deport Mexicans. In 1942, a new programme called “Braceros” was initiated to allow Mexicans to work as contract workers.

In 2017, the total population of Mexican immigrants reached over 35 million. Some famous contributions by Mexican immigrants are: Chicano Murals (painting), Mexican American literature (by Sandra Cisneros and Rudolfo Anaya), Music (Selena Quintanilla-Pérez and Ritchie Valens), dance (Cinco de Mayo). While some famous contributors are: Mario Molina, won the Nobel Prize (1995) in Chemistry, for research on the hole in the ozone layer. Ellen Ochoa became the first to go on the Space Shuttle *Discovery* in 1993, and later served as director of NASA’s Johnson Space Center. Sonia Maria Sotomayor was the first Mexican woman to be appointed as a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. To fight against discrimination, Mexicans started the Chicano Movement to advocate for their social and political rights. Dolores Huerta was a defender of Mexican-American workers’ rights. Cesar Chavez was the leader of the United Farm Workers. Salvador Hector Ochoa was a Pulitzer-winning journalist, known for her reporting on immigration. Edward Roybal, Mexican American leader, elected to the US Congress. And leaders such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez have played a crucial role in shaping policies for the upliftment of their community.

After giving a panoramic view of immigrants’ contributions, there is a need to juxtapose, compare, and contrast immigrants’ responses (Hank’s, the Africans’, and Mexicans’), and the society they come from and come into, to see their contributions and misappropriations in their host country, and what makes them different from each other. Hank comes from a more developed society, with vast scientific knowledge about the natural world compared to sixth-century English society. In contrast, Africans imported to the US were at a lower developmental level than 19th-century Americans, so they did not know how to stand against their oppressors, unlike Hank, who could stand against Merlin and Arthur and break their superior power. The same applies to modern-day

Mexican immigrants in the US, whose education is poorer than the majority of US citizens. As a result, most flee their country to find better economic stability or escape mafia cartels. Unfortunately, since they have little to offer in the US market; they are forced to do the worst paid jobs, or remain unemployed. However, the difference lies in their desire to remain in America (like Africans), or to go back to their country (like previous Mexican generations). Hank on the other hand, with power and scientific knowledge, knows how to use the latter to channel the former, to dominate those he considers as uncivilized. He manipulates people to achieve his desired state; he sees them as animals, uncivilized, and even calls them “human muck” (Twain, 1889, p. 256). Like 19th-century slave holders, Hank thrives on the toil of Camelot’s people to build a tower in the air; nevertheless, he does not hesitate to reproach them. Instead of using the knowledge of science and technology for the welfare of society, Hank used the same to kill thousands of people. This research divulges how different immigrants impact society, with or without power.

Although the problem of immigration has been perennial in American history, Mexicans’ immigration issues are different from the Africans’; therefore, they demand a different response. The dilemma of hostility/hospitality towards Mexican immigrants and the scope of their future assimilation is a crucial concern to ponder over. It is visible in their reckless behaviour to “go back and forth across borders, especially the porous Mexican border, with little concern for the problems or future of American society” (Gerber, 2021, p. 132). This ceaseless movement raises the question of identity – would they ever become American, or would they remain Mexican? Huntington argues that “the contemporary failure of assimilation is based on a substantive historical transition in the character of immigrants who, he assumed, no longer *care to assimilate*” (emphasis added, Gerber, 2021, p. 132). Also, they are conscious of American’s “core Anglo-Protestant culture” (qtd. in Gerber, 2021, p. 131), and believe that it must be embraced to become real Americans.

Illegal Mexican migrants fear legal persecution, which makes it hard for them to reside and work in America. The future of illegal immigrants’ assimilation in mainstream society depends on the socio-economic basis, which is an unresolvable question since the fear of persecution has made it hard for them to work and stay in the United States. The reason behind Mexican immigration to the United States is also “the uneven performance of the Mexican economy” (Gerber, 2021, p. 137). In America, “a Mexican between 23 and 27 years old with four years of education is likely to make almost six

times as much in the United States as he or she would in Mexico” (qtd. in Aguila et al, 2012, p. 38). American identity is constantly challenged by flows of immigrants; furthermore, Mexicans immigrants’ ethnicity is “evidence of resistance to integration to American society, rather than of a desire for a supportive communal affiliation” (Gerber, 2021, p. 114). They retain their own culture and identity; therefore, all efforts at cultural assimilation are doomed to fail. In contrast, African immigrants were worthy of citizenship since they contributed as if America was their own land.

Like Mexicans, Hank does not want to assimilate into medieval English society; therefore, he returns to America, which he later regrets at the novel’s end, “I seemed to have flown back out of that age into this of ours . . . *there is* an abyss of thirteen centuries . . . between me and all that is dear to me” (emphasis added, Twain, 1889, p. 268). In England, he saw Camelot’s people as ignoramuses “these animals didn’t reason” (Hansen, 1973, p. 69). Indeed, Hank had no reason at all since he did not give a second thought before killing thousands of people. Like Hank, Mexicans are accused of not caring about societal welfare, which inevitably breeds disorder. America demands political and cultural conformity to enact the idea of “Americanization” that Mexicans failed to practice. Indeed, assimilation is “not simply a process of the immigrants becoming Americans, but ultimately of mutual accommodation, in which society changes alongside the changing individuals and groups that compose it” (Gerber, 2021, p. 119). Thus, the future assimilation of Mexican immigrants may take some generations, so that they, like Africans, become a part of the mainstream American society.

The problem with immigration in the United States is that the country “has received about 75 million immigrants since record-keeping began in 1820” (Hirschman, 2013, p. 37). However, the data gathered by the Immigration Policy Center on immigrants’ contributions states:

Immigrants are vital to prosperity—as consumers, business owners, and workers. Moreover, through the taxes they pay, immigrants also make contributions that prop up the pension and medical programs of the American welfare state. These contributions are especially crucial at a time when the native-born American population is aging, has left the workforce, does not contribute proportionately to tax revenues, and requires such programs to maintain its quality of life in retirement. (Gerber, 2021, p. 72)

In America, some people support illegal immigration, they believe that “they could not stay in business unless they took advantage of the cheapest labor they could find” (Gerber, 2021, p. 77). Indeed, the “deportation of illegal immigrants grew dramatically

during the first three years of the Obama administration (2009-2011), to about 1.18 million” (Gerber, 2021, p. 80). A study by the Immigration Policy Center estimated that a “state’s economy would lose up to \$83 million a year in state and local taxes if unauthorized immigrants were removed” (Gerber, 2021, p. 134). In 2017, Trump’s administration also banned immigrants and refugees from Muslims states in the name of national security.

The foundational idea of “American exceptionalism”¹ demonstrates that the hospitable nature of society towards immigrants is demystified in modern times. It has persisted in Americans’ belief that there is freedom of opinion, discussion, upward mobility, and liberal individualism. Hector St. John De Crevecoeur, in his Letter-III, “What is an American?” (1781, p. 70), outlines contributions made by erstwhile Europeans (now Americans), stating it is they who “are the western pilgrims who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigour, and industry”. His writing is an unabashed celebration of America as a nation state, where immigrants have constituted and contributed to nation-building. Immigrants pursue opportunities, and America has long been the place that opened different avenues for realizing those possibilities. However, the anti-immigrant movement currently displays a demystification of American exceptionalism, where the former stand against the latter’s principles of equality and fraternity. The anti-immigration movement is about keeping the notion of “Americanness” intact. It is indeed a self-contradictory belief since America is a melting pot of humanity because of its status as a multicultural nation. Moreover, America is also a competitive society that values hard work and progress embodied in the idea of the “American dream”.

Ironically, the anti-immigration movement is propagated by those Americans who once were migrants, now, they have forgotten their time and immigrant ancestors. Indeed, “U. S. history has witnessed cycles of open borders, followed by state action to seal those borders. Over time, parochial, exclusivist visions of the American people have competed with eclectic, cosmopolitan visions” (Gerber, 2021, p. 37). The problem of illegal immigration has also consolidated the issue of border security in a time of global terrorism. However, there is an idea of “attitudinal segmentation”² that persists in a society where some people become hospitable towards immigrants while some see them as a threat to their cherished values and culture. The hospitable attitude exceptionally pervades among the educated classes and second-generation immigrants. This reveals the conflict between immigrant parents and children, where the former defend tradition,

while the latter seek to embrace cultural differences. Even the government encourages transnationality by providing the option of dual citizenship, to ease the transfer of money and capital between homeland and lands of resettlement. The problem of global terrorism and illegal migration in America can be seen as a hindrance to becoming a more hospitable nation towards immigrants because of the nation's security concerns. However, the problem of immigration is not an unprecedented event for America. They have not only encountered mass immigration before but have become much more robust than ever because of the diversity embedded in a multicultural society.

Conclusion

This research has lent a new perspective to Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee* in the context of security studies to redesign a more hospitable world for immigrants out of the present hostile environment. Hank, a 19th-century American, is seen as a threat, and by declaring himself a magician, he is playing games for his security/survival in medieval England. By keeping the payoff in his mind, Hank counters the hostility unleashed on him with appropriate stratagems. After becoming "The Boss", he intends to dominate thousands of people. Like Hitler, Hank lives for an idea. Instead of using scientific knowledge and power for the welfare of society, he uses the same to kill thousands of people. This article demonstrates how Hank fell short of his dream to bring modernity and civilization to medieval England because of his greed for power and comfort. It also highlights the imperatives of immigrants' contributions by presenting a panoramic picture of their contributions to America. And by comparing and contrasting Hank with Mexicans and Africans immigrants, this research shows the difference between being powerful and powerless in society. America's first immigrants were from British stock; they were hard-working and god-fearing people. They were considered ideal material for citizenship, unlike contemporary immigrants, who stereotypically possess more negative characteristics. Even the second generation of Mexicans immigrants leave school early for the workforce, although education is certainly an essential means for socio-economic mobility. They have high participation in the labour force but get a lower income in comparison to whites, but higher than African Americans. Instead of assimilation in America, Mexicans will, perhaps, create their own world in America.

At present, hostility/hospitality towards immigrants is a debatable issue since America is also hostile towards Mexican immigrants, which is apparent in Donald Trump's decree to build a wall at the US-Mexico border. In order to restrain the flow of

illegal migrants, he formulated four policies in his presidency: an end to catch and release, the title 42 policy, Mexico policy, and border wall. In the first year of his presidency, Trump deported around one million illegal immigrants. In his speech on 1 March 2024, Trump asserts the incompetency of the current president (Joe Biden), and how his open border policies have created an unsafe environment in the United States. He referred to “Biden Migrant Crime” that resulted in “33,000 assaults, 3,000 robberies, 6,900 burglaries, 7,500 weapon crime, 4300 sex crime, 1600 kidnapping, 1700 homicide and murders” (Fox 4: 53). Gerg Abbot (Governor of Texas) also endorsed Trump’s policies by implementing the same in Texas. He states that Texas is the first state in America that has built a border wall and deployed the Texas National Guard to patrol the border. On 17 December 2023, Trump promised to start the biggest operation of deportation, after winning the presidency. He said, “on my first day back in the White House, I will terminate every open border policy of the Biden administration and I will invoke the Alien Enemies Act to remove all known or suspected gang members, drug dealers or cartel members from the United States, ending the scourge of illegal alien gang violence” (Forbes 13:06). Indeed, the reaction of the host country also depends on the numbers and demeanour of immigrants, because an individual presence may not be frowned upon, but the arrival of 10,000 people is a matter of great concern for any country.

Apart from America, the persisting problem of immigration also steered Britain out of the European Union. After the retaking of Afghanistan by the Taliban, the people of Afghanistan are seeking shelter in Europe from the gateway of Europe, i.e. Turkey. However, this world can be made more hospitable by including guest-worker programmes, penalties for hiring illegal immigrants, and bestowing citizenship on those unauthorized immigrants who desire it. In *Connecticut Yankee*, even a single person – Hank Morgan, has brought tremendous violence by killing 25,000 people through technology. Although Hank represents a negative example of an immigrant, we cannot ignore what contributions he could have made, and the contributions made by African/Mexican immigrants in America. This research looks at the scope of immigrants’ contributions and strives to re-imagine the concept of hostility as hospitality to achieve a more hospitable world. Indeed, being hospitable towards one another is essential in this world for achieving global peace without sacrificing the nation’s security for the holistic development of humanity.

Endnotes

¹ Alexis de Tocqueville was the first to use the term “exceptional” to describe the United States and the American people in his classic work *Democracy in America* (1835-1840). It posits the belief that America is better than all other nations. It is distinguished from other nations not only because of being distinctive, but also because of being an exemplar for other nations in becoming a democratic nation, since America was the first democratic nation in the world.

² “Attitudinal segmentation” is about different perceptions towards immigrants from different generations. For further elaboration, see Dempster, H. et al., 2017. “Understanding Public Attitudes towards Refugees and Migrants.” London: Overseas Development Institute & Chatham House, pp. 1-27.

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Chander Shekhar

Assistant Professor of English

SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Delhi-NCR,

Modinagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh- 201204

shekharjakhad@gmail.com