

The Duke and the King



“I AM THE LATE DAUPHIN.”

Chapters 18 to 20 introduce us to the duke and the king, two of the novel’s strangest characters. Much scholarship has been done on the symbolic importance of these characters, and much of that scholarship focuses on the ways in which these characters can be seen as symbols of the conflict between social classes in the novel.

In a brief in class writing of two or more paragraphs, please explain what *you* think Twain has them representing. In your writing be sure to address the following points:

- What the duke and king may represent in contrast to each other, to Huck, to Jim, and to the townspeople they meet.
- Twain’s use of satire in his representation of the duke and the king.
- The importance of Huck’s comment that he didn’t take long to make up his mind that “these liars warn’t no kings nor dukes at all, but just low-down humbugs and frauds,” (125) and that he “never said nothing, never let on,” (125) because he believed it would “keep peace in the family,” (125).
- At least one citation to illustrate your opinion.