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# Litraya

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# *Litraya*

## JURNAL LINGUISTIK, SASTRA, DAN BUDAYA

*Litraya* merupakan jurnal ilmiah berisi artikel ilmiah tentang linguistik, sastra, dan budaya, baik yang ditulis dalam bahasa Indonesia maupun Inggris, berupa hasil analisis, kajian dan penerapan teori, penelitian, dan pembahasan kepastakaan. Terbit pertama kali pada Oktober 2002 dengan rencana terbit dua kali setahun pada bulan April dan Oktober.

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Redaksi menerima sumbangan tulisan yang belum pernah diterbitkan dalam media cetak lain. Naskah diketik dengan spasi rangkap pada kertas kuarto, panjang tulisan sekitar 20 halaman (lebih lanjut silakan baca Petunjuk bagi penulis pada halaman kulit dalam belakang). Naskah yang masuk dievaluasi oleh Penyunting Ahli. Penyunting dapat melakukan perubahan pada tulisan yang dimuat demi keseragaman format tanpa mengubah maksud dan isi.

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## SALAM SAPA REDAKSI

Bismillahirrohmanirrohim,

Puji syukur dipanjatkan keharibaan Allah swt yang senantiasa mencurahkan kasih sayang dan memberi tuntunan-Nya sehingga kami dapat menerbitkan Jurnal Ilmiah *Litraya* ini dengan tepat waktu dari yang direncanakan. Untuk ketepatan tersebut diucapkan terima kasih kepada penulis yang dengan tertib telah memenuhi seluruh ketentuan yang ada dan semua pihak yang telah bekerja keras untuk mencapai seluruh target yang telah ditetapkan.

Dari belasan naskah yang masuk, setelah dilakukan pencermatan dan atas berbagai pertimbangan dapat dihadirkan 7 (tujuh) tulisan dengan rincian sebagai berikut, 3 (tiga) naskah membahas linguistik, 3 (tiga) naskah sastra dan 1 (satu) naskah budaya.

Dengan segenap kerendahan hati dan permohonan maaf, beberapa naskah dikembalikan agar dilakukan penyempurnaan pada isi dan format penulisan. Kami mengundang siapa pun untuk berkarya tulis pada *Litraya* ini sesuai dengan nafas dan misi yang diembannya.

Billahi taufiq wal hidayah.

*Redaksi*

# CHILDHOOD EPISODES OF MARK TWAIN

Ulaya Ahdiani

## Abstract

No study of American literature or even of world literature would be complete without the inclusion of Samuel Clemens, who is better known to the world as Mark Twain. He shaped American literature and thought, wrote at least half a dozen of its major books, and many short stories that are woven into the tapestry of America. As his friend William Dean Howells said, Twain was "sole, incomparable", unlike all the other "literary men" Howell had known.

Mark Twain has become a legend. However, his real name, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, is not as popular as his pseudonym. The pen name brings him into the mainstream of American literature. For nearly fifty years he entertained America with his insight about the feelings of the common man. He also entertained America with his wit in retelling his own experiences. Once, he was not considered to be a great man, for his writings were mostly telling about children. Today, his writings are still enjoyed by readers over 100 years after they were written. Reading his works, is like following his own life.

## A. Introduction

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* seem to be stories for children because they tell about children and their world. They are rich in many funny events that children usually experience. It is probably its humor that makes *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was once regarded as a Popular Literature rather than High Literature. Brander Matthews indicates that *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is a tale of boyish adventure told as an autobiographic (Inge, 27). Lionel Trilling figures out that one can read it at ten and then annually ever after, and each year find it as fresh as the year before, that it has changed in becoming somewhat larger (Inge, 83).

Some critics believe that Mark Twain was mostly inspired by his own

experiences in writing his novels. Both Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn were drawn from his boyhood. Apparently the author recorded his boyhood into these two novels, in other words, Mark Twain once experienced what Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn experienced. Mark Twain himself claimed in the preface of Penguin Popular Classics edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* that most of the adventures in the books really occurred. That one or two were experiences of his and the rest of those boys who were schoolmates of his. Huck Finn is drawn from life, Tom Sawyer is also (1994: 5). This writing below is not a research-based writing. It is merely trying to reveal that once a common boy has become a great legend in the world.

## B. Discussion

Mark Twain was born in 30 November 1835, in Florida, Missouri,

when the Halley's comet blazed. He was born under the name of Samuel Langhorn Clemens. He was the sixth of seven children of John Marshall Clemens and Jane Lampton. Both parents were descended from families who had been slaveholders and landowners in the South. Sam Clemens was born to a poor but proud slaveholding family (Inge, 1984). His father was a judge in Missouri and he died when Sam Clemens was twelve. From a secret hiding place, Sam Clemens witnessed the autopsy of his father (Smith, 1994:par. 4).

In November 1939, the Clemens family moved to Hannibal, a shabby little town along the Mississippi river, where he was brought up. Hannibal was to be his home for thirteen and a half years. Sam Clemens remembered the river as the great, the majestic, the magnificent Mississippi, rolling its mile-wide tide along, shinning in the sun (Baldanza, 1961). The greatness of the river offered adventures, travels, and the most gorgeous of all occupation. It is a dream of his and boys' of his age to be steamboat man. His life along the great Mississippi river inspired him later to write books, one of them becomes a legend in American literary history.

Sam Clemens struggled for health during his early years, but as he grew older he developed to be different from his elder brothers, Orion and Henry. His

mischievousness led to serial adventures; nearly drowning, smoking, running away from home and intentionally having measles (Baldanza, 2). Mark Twain says that it happened once on him. "It was Henry who called my mother's attention to the fact that the thread with which she had sewed my collar together to keep me from going in swimming had changed color"(Neider, 1975: 36). In 1845, there was measles epidemic in Hannibal, which also brought Twain into his bed, almost died. He intentionally had this measles by going around his sick friend. Mark Twain was really enjoying his being dying. In his autobiography he says, "I have never enjoyed anything in my life any more than I enjoyed dying that time" (Neider, 1975: 85). In 1849, again Hannibal was paralyzed by cholera. Mother Clemens took prevention by giving her son painkiller. Instead of having the painkiller for himself, Samuel Clemens poured it down into the cracks in the floor of his room. He also gave Peter, his cat, the painkiller. The effect was amazing. The cat was hysteric, dancing around the room, and breaking everything in it (Neider, 1975: 37-38).

Samuel Clemens had close relationship with his brothers, especially Henry. Mark Twain said about Henry, "It was Henry's duty to report me when I needed reporting and neglected to do myself, and he was very faithful in discharging that

duty." (Neider, 35). Since Sam Clemens was a troublesome in the house, he even got a punishment for something he did not do. Almost everyday Sam stole the sugar from its place, but Henry never did that kind of thing. His mother knew that very well. One day Henry stole the sugar and happened to break the prized and precious Old-English sugar bowl, which was an heirloom in the family. This was the first time Sam had chance to report Henry to his mother. However, when his mother saw it, she did not say anything, she merely gave Sam a crack on the skull with her thimble (Neider, 36).

Samuel Clemens early exhibited the first signs of his lifelong nervous sensibility in his sleepwalking and exaggerated guilt feelings. These characteristics were augmented by the impression made on him by the Calvinist Sunday school doctrines and the fearful superstitions of Negro slaves that were part of his Missouri boyhood (Baldanza, 2).

He spent idyllic summers in his uncle's farmhouse. He was also involved in a boy gang. There were also some disturbing experiences; he saw slave beatings, a murder and corpses (Baldanza, 1961). Samuel Clemens had been acquainted with Negroes from his very young age. His parents owned some slaves, and so did his uncle. He spent much of his time and made friends with them. One of the Negroes became his best

friend and remained to be one. Samuel Clemens described him as a faithful and affectionate good friend, ally and adviser, a middle aged slave whose head was the best one in the Negro quarter, whose sympathies were wide and warm and whose heart was honest and simple and knew no guile (Neider, 6). Sam Clemens got strong fond for Negroes and his appreciation of certain of their fine qualities. On his schoolboy days he did not know that there was anything wrong about slavery. He took it for granted that slavery was a usual tradition of American framings. There was nothing against it on those days. The local papers said nothing about it and the churches taught that God approved it. Besides, Hannibal people never abused the slaves.

His boyhood memories also includes in his remembrance of the farm where Mark Twain used to live in. He remembered not only the joyful life, but also the pain. "Mark Twain remembered watching his father 'cuff' a slave boy named Lewis who became the model for Aunt Polly's 'small colored boy' Jim in Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn" (Inge, 1984: 4). At the age of nine, Mark Twain saw a slave beaten his skull by an overseer, right in the middle of Hannibal's main street. At fourteen, he saw a slave who was accused of raping a white woman was hung before one of the largest crowd ever gathered for a social function in that part of Missouri (Inge, 1984: 4).

There was an island in the bank side of the Mississippi river where Sam used to spend his spare time. To reach the island, Sam had to row across the river. Pettit says that while rowing around the foot of the island in the Mississippi that became Jackson's Island in Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, Mark Twain happened upon a black corpse, disemboweled and sunk in the river by slave hunters (Inge, 1984: 4).

Sam Clemens became a printer's apprentice after his leaving school for his father's death. His mother decided to take him out of school for she could not afford it. This decision was his turning point of his life, as this was his first step on his way to be a writer. Become a writer was one of Sam Clemens's dreams. He liked reading much. This encouraged him to become a writer. It was necessary for him to accomplish in printing matters before he started writing. It took him about two years to become a quick and accurate printer. He decided that it was the time for him to start writing.

His love of traveling brought him to move to several printing offices in many towns and many states to write about his experiences during his traveling. After becoming a writer for ten years, he had saved enough money. By this time his past dream of trading cocaine in the Amazon raised. He was told by a friend of his that trading cocaine was

fort unable. Trading cocaine was legal, then.

In the spring of 1857 he bought a ticket on a steamboat *Paul Jones* to take him to New Orleans. In the middle of his way to the Amazon, however, his boyhood's fantasy to become a steamboat pilot suddenly changed his mind of trading cocaine. This was the time when Sam Clemens decided to be a steersman.

He began to learn how to be a good steersman. It took him almost eighteen months before he got his license in 1859. He may have piloted freight boats during the last months of his training, for in those simple days fully licensed pilot were legally required only on boats carrying passengers. For him those years had included both adventure and tragedy (Ferguson, 51). From becoming a steamboat pilot he could save some money and he could spare some for his mother and brothers.

Samuel Clemens considers his life during piloting as it was not a work, it was a play - delightful play, vigorous play, and he really loved it (Neider, 317). He worked as a steersman for four years. He served the Mississippi river traffic until it was closed for the Civil War.

At the outbreak of the American Civil War (1861) Clemens chose not to get involved and moved to Carson City, Nevada. After an unsuccessful attempt at gold and silver mining he joined the staff of a



newspaper in Virginia City, Nevada. He first wrote under the pen name, "Mark Twain" (nn, 2000: par. 4).

His four years of piloting had been the most important years in his life from the literary standpoint (Ferguson, 50). So important it was he even wrote his books under his now immortal pseudonym "Mark Twain", which refers to a leadsman's call indicating that the ship is in a safe two fathoms, safe water for any boat on the river (Baldanza, 1961). He used his pseudonym since 1863 and Twain wrote his first popular story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Cleavers County" in 1865.

He continued to travel as a correspondent for various newspapers, and in 1869 his travel letters from Europe were collected into the popular book, "The Innocents Abroad."

In the beginning of February 1870 he was married to Miss Olivia L. Langdon, whom he called Livy, from Elmyra, New York. She had been a friend to Sam Clemens. She helped him in editing his novels before they were published. From his marriage he had four children, Langdon Clemens, who died at twenty-two months, Susy Clemens, Jean Clemens, and Clara Clemens. During his settling down in Hartford, Connecticut, it was his most productive years as a writer. Between 1873 and 1889 he wrote seven novels including his Mississippi River books as well as "The Prince and the

Pauper" (1882) and "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" (1889) (nn, 2000: par.4).

In 1873 he collaborated with Charles Dudley Warner and wrote his first novel "The Gilded Age". It would name the era in which Americans lived. The Gilded Age became synonymous with the excesses of the wealthy Americans who flaunted their riches by imitating classical cultures. Mark Twain also became the first author to use the newly invented typewriter for the final draft of the manuscript. In 1875 he published "Tom Sawyer" which achieved only modest sales. He began working on "Huckleberry Finn" but had trouble with the book and did not finish it until 1884 (Smith, 1994: par. 8-9). When it was finally published in 1885, it was banned by the Library Committee of Control for its coarse language. But this banning was a fortune for him, for it became a free publicity and people had to buy the book to read it because they could not borrow from the library (Smith, 1994: par. 11).

Mark Twain combined his long-hard workings, traveling, and humor into his books. He also expressed his disasters with its increasing irony and bitterness after his bankruptcy and the death of his beloved daughter. As Twain's life and career progressed he became increasingly pessimistic, losing much of the humorous, cocky tone of his earlier years. More and more of his

work expressed the gloomy view that all human motives are ultimately selfish. Even so Twain is best remembered as a humorist who used his sharp wit and comic exaggeration to attack the false pride and self-importance he saw in humanity (nn, 2000: par. 6).

After his death, he was widely regarded as the most prominent and characteristic American writer of his generation. He died on 21 April 1910, in the same night with the blazing of the Halley's comet.

### C. Closing

Throughout his life, Samuel Clemens learns many valuable experiences. So valuable are those experiences that encourage him to pour them into the flow of thought to enrich his works of art. His works are never ending studied. He becomes one of those remarkable legends in American literature as well as in the world literature.

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