

Artistic technique of mark twain in american literature

Literature



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Artistic Technique of Mark Twain in American Literature Born Samuel

Langhorne Clemens, Mark Twain employed the technique of humour in most of his literary works. This includes exaggeration, satire, irony, high and low comedy, parody, absurdity, and other forms of humour. In his literary works, Mark Twain was more influenced by his literary profession and less by the past humourist novelists. He undertook his training in the school of newspaper fun-making and humorous lecturing, including an introduction to the Orthodox arts. He worked as a newspaper printer, then as a newspaper writer, with considerable exposure and interaction with famous writers. This experience therefore, shaped Twain and improved his writing expertise. The kind of humour and satire employed by Mark Twain did not result in any indecency or fierce seriousness ("Bartleby. com"). He meant for laughter of people, to take a break from their serious life. His humour equally ridiculed things and people of all statuses, including the poor and the rich, the poets and the fools, and the sinners and saints (Bellamy 52). Therefore, as much as Twain employs humour, he leaves his audience with the responsibility of identifying the moral lessons in his works, as serious issues affecting society are presented lightly by Twain.

In most of Twain's books such as *The Innocent broad*, *Following the Equator*, *The adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *A Tramp Abroad*, *Roughing It*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry*, some of the characters are involved in either domestic or foreign travel. In his real life, Twain loved travelling both within U. S. A. and abroad. His travelling experiences helped him compare different world cultures with the American culture. With this, he bluntly exposed the differences between what travel guidebooks wrote about attraction sites,

and what he saw as an observer. His expeditions also highly influenced the content of his works. These gave him the opportunity to address different issues in a range of tones such as irate, outraged, appreciative, and annoyed. Twain's other works such as *A Pen Warmed Up in Hell*, is an example of his works that employs the humour technique of high comedy. In this book, the travels made by some of the characters, such as when Satan visits paradise and when Captain Stormfields visits heaven, are quite interesting, and as well based on social, theological, and philosophical perspectives (Bellamy 62-66).

Mark Twain also employed the technique of using the eyes of the present to view the past. For example, he makes some of his nineteenth century characters travel into the ancient past. These visits to ancient history by Twain's characters gave him an opportunity to veer into the past, and analyse the nature of events, places, and people who lived during different eras of the ancient past. Similarly, this analysis gave him a basis for proclaiming judgement on the past atrocities, social evils, and corruption of the church and political systems in society. In addition, the nature of past societies helped him to compare the past technology with the technology in his era, as well as past philosophy and ideologies with those of his generation. In some of his works, Twain allows characters of different social classes to trade their status. When a rich person takes a poor man's position, they get the opportunity of understanding how it means to live in poverty. Twain therefore uses this to condemn social evils in the society, which propagate poverty of the poor through their oppression and alienation ("*Bartleby. com*"). Therefore, Twain uses different forms of the humour

technique to address important social, political, and religious issues in society.

Works Cited

“ Bartleby. com.” Mark Twain. n. d. Web. Retrieved 13th December 2012

Bellamy, Gladys. “ Mark Twain as a Literary Artist.” New York: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012.