

Idée de départ (WHAT) The whole passage permeates with the prevalence of time.

Pistes (fondées sur mon repérage HOW) : memory and dynamism.

Interprétation (WHY) : the vivid, picturesque scene which is remembered participates to the realistic effect of the excerpt.

Memory :

As he recalls a memory from « when [he] was a child » (l.1), the narrator achieves it so vividly that the past moment eventually becomes one with the present. One shall note how gradual the move is : the first twelve lines, sprinkled with a great many stative verbs in the simple past (« was » l.1, »left » l.3, « lived » l.5, « remained » l.7), are followed with a series of infinite forms (« drowsing » l.12, « sitting » l.14, « loafing along » l.16, « doing » l.17, « rolling » l.21, « shining » l.21, « bounding » l.22). The arrival of the steamer coincides with the use of the present (« appears » l.24, « lifts up » l.25, « changes » l.26, and the like). Not only does that gradual move enable the narrator to relate miscellaneous actions but it also throws into relief how the town becomes bustling with activity when the boat arrives. This succession effect to enhance the change entailed by the arrival of the boat is also made up with the combined use of time subordinate clauses (« when I was a boy » l.1, « when a circus came » l.4), time markers (« now and then » l.5, « before these events » l.10, « after all these years » l.11) and adverbs (« always » l.7, « presently » l.25). Verbs are gradually less stative : « Drags, carts, men, boys, all go hurrying from many quarters to a common center, the wharf » (l.29).

Dynamism :

The buoyant dynamism of the town is here suggested with the combination of two dynamic verbs « go » and « hurry » in a short, vivid sentence. The way how the nouns are determined is also worth noticing inasmuch as the multiplicity or even diversity bespoken by the plural forms, preceded by the zero article or the quantifier « many », is finally « assembled » (l.30), concentrated in(to) one place « THE wharf » which they, as a community, all know and share. The movement implied in these examples initiates a scene fraught with movements and sounds. The initial « peaceful » (l.21) « empty » (l.13) « still » scene becomes one « black with passengers » (l.37) where « the pent steam is screaming » (l.42). Such « husbanded grandeur » (l.39) left a permanent mark on the narrator's ambition and life.

The prevalence of time frames the narrator's remembrance of a ritual moment which sets the town off in lively, dynamic motion (WHAT). As he recalls a memory from « when [he] was a child » (l.1), the narrator indeed achieves it so vividly that the past moment eventually becomes one with the present. One shall note how gradual the move is : the first twelve lines, sprinkled with a great many stative verbs in the simple past (« was » l.1, »left » l.3, « lived » l.5, « remained » l.7), are followed with a series of infinite forms (« drowsing » l.12, « sitting » l.14, « loafing along » l.16, « doing » l.17, « rolling » l.21, « shining » l.21, « bounding » l.22). The arrival of the steamer coincides with the use of the present (« appears » l.24, « lifts up » l.25, « changes » l.26, and the like). Not only does that gradual move enable the narrator to relate miscellaneous actions but it also throws into relief how the town becomes bustling with activity when the boat arrives. This succession effect to enhance the change entailed by the arrival of the boat is also made up with the combined use of time subordinate clauses (« when I was a boy » l.1, « when a circus came » l.4), time markers (« now and then » l.5, « before these events » l.10, « after all these years » l.11) and adverbs (« always » l.7, « presently » l.25). Verbs are gradually less stative : « Drags, carts, men, boys, all go hurrying from many quarters to a common center, the wharf » (l.29). The buoyant dynamism of the town is here suggested with the combination of two dynamic verbs « go » and « hurry » in a short sentence. The way how the nouns are determined is also worth noticing inasmuch as the multiplicity or even diversity bespoken by the plural forms, preceded by the zero article or the quantifier « many » , is finally « assembled » (l.30), concentrated in(to) one place « THE wharf » which they, as a community, all know and share. The wharf enlivens the whole town. The movement implied in these examples initiates a scene fraught with movements and sounds. The initial « peaceful » (l.21) « empty » (l.13) « still » scene becomes one « black with passengers » (l.37) where « the pent steam is screaming » (l.42). Such « husbanded grandeur » (l.39) left a permanent mark on the narrator's ambition and life (HOW). **Such hypotyposis unfailingly participates to the realist aspect of the narrative as it provides the reader with a description of a vivid, picturesque scene as if it were occurring in front of his own eyes. (WHY)**

(to what extent) can the telling of a memory bring the past and the future together/be all-encompassing?

The reader is shown a realist memory, in which the passing of time is prevalent. (Annonce partie 1 WHAT)

- 1) A realist past
 - a) realist (details/toponymy/plausibility/picturesque)
 - b) prevalence of time (memory/dynamism)

Fraught with detailed memories (paragraph 1), this vivid picturesque excerpt (paragraph 2) conveys a realistic effect. This aims to provide the reader with a recognizable experience or impression which the novelist and the reader, the narrator and the narratee could have in common (WHY). Although the text is sprinkled with oppositions, the novelist resorts to many elements to make the narrative unifying (annonce de la partie 2 WHAT).

- 2) A uniting narrative
 - a) a narrative fraught with oppositions (subjectivity/objectivity; before/now/after; mvt/immobility)
 - b) the boat, memory, writing as a link (connecting one to the other ; the past to the present ; the present to the future ; a rallying point)

However rampant the differences might be at first (paragraph 1), the novelist will lay emphasis on the unifying nature of the river, the boat or his memory (paragraph 2) so as to bring people together, to unify the community (WHY). This communion will then hinge round a symbolical reflexion upon change, and even the purpose of one's life.(annonce partie 3 WHAT)

- 3) A future in progress
 - a) a symbolical narrative about change, progress.(change/progress/movement/noise/life vs immobility/silence/death, finiteness vs infiniteness)
 - b) the purpose of one's life (destiny/calling; religion)

Conclusion :

Through a recognizable experience or impression, the narratee will be one with the narrator. The reader and the novelist will then share a sense of belonging, a reflexion upon one's destiny. This past memory will enable a communion between different moments, various people throwing into relief the invigorating effect of the boat, the Mississippi River, memory, memoirs in the construction of one's life, one's fate. The novelist's memory will then become the reader's one, and Mark Twain's memoirs the ones of an entire community, corroborating "E. Scott Fitzgerald's assertion : « That is part of the beauty of all literature. You discover that your longings are universal longings, that you're not lonely and isolated from anyone. You belong. »