ANALYSIS OF COKETOWN

The text I’m going to analysis belongs to the fifth novel of *Hard Times* (1854) written by Charles Dickens. The text is a narrative rendering of the philosophy of Utilitarianism according to the Puritan culture of the Victorian Age.
Starting from the title, the reader expects to read a text about industrialisation. The name “Coketown” is made up by two words: “coke” and “town” which reminds to the material that permits the Industrial Revolution: coke. As a result, the reader imagines reading about a town where the lifestyle is influenced by industrialisation.
The narrator is a third person omniscient narrator.
The main theme of the text is the characterisation and the organisation of the industrial city of Coketown. The text starts with the two friends who are walking along the street. Later the narrator starts to describe the city and what characterised it.
“It was a red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it…”. In addition, the reader can know that Coke town is an industrial city because the words “town of machinery”, “tall chimneys” and “interminable serpents of smoke” reveals the presence of factories. All the realities were influenced by the presence of factories. From the sentence the reader can understand that the city is made up of factories. The factories release fumes and ashes that impregnate the walls of the houses, factories and buildings.
The reader can understand that during the Victorian Age, the United Kingdom lived a period of industrial development. The increasing presence of the industries favoured the birth and the growth of pollution. Pollution caused people’s illness bound with respiratory problems and had an influence on nature: “a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye…”.
The text is rich of similes “it was a town of unnatural red and black like painted face of a savage” and “like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness”. The similes have the role to make the reader clear which was the situation during the Victorian Age and make the reader understand clearly the lifestyle during that period.
The repetition of sentences and adjectives as “one like another”, “fact, fact, fact”, “same” and “like” sound like refrains which give the rhythm to the narration and, at the same time, allow the reader better to understand how much important work was during the Victorian Age for people.
After the narrator focuses his attention on the buildings that made up the city: chapel, square, jail, infirmary and townhall. The presence of the place and building that characterized the city probably remind to the seriality of the industrialisation where everything was repeated and built following a strategy.