**Analysis of Mr. Bounderby**

In the following text I’m going to analyze and discuss the text “Mr. Bounderby”, that is an extract of Hard Times’ Chapter 4, a novel written by Charles Dickens.

The main characters of the extract are Mr. Bounderby and Mr. Gradgrind, who are friends.

The text is arranged into three sequences; in the first sequence the novelist tells about Mr. Bounderby, who is a rich man. Right from the start the novelist ridicules Mr. Bounderby telling that he is “a banker, merchant, manufacturer, and what not”, because a man can’t do all these jobs.

Mr. Bounderby is described as a bloated man with a great head; in the first sequence, the reader in an indirect way is able to convey to the reader that Mr. Bounderby is a man bonded to a materialistic life. Dickens uses an exaggerate and an hyperbolic language to characterise Mr. Bounderby, throughout the use of adjectives and expressions as “a big and loud man”, “with a great head and forehead”, “a man with a pervading appearance on him of being inflated like a balloon”.

Right from the first part of the extract, as in Oliver Twist, Charles Dickens uses the narrative techniques of grotesque and pathos: at first the novelist throughout irony and sarcasm makes in ridicules the character to entertain the reader, but subsequently Dickens is able to convey the reader a sentiment of empathy for the terrible children’s life conditions and for the evils of the Victorian society.

Thanks Dicken’s irony, by the description of Mr. Bounderby’s body and actions is underlined his egoism and the absence of vitality.

After Mr. Bounderby’s physical and social description, in the second sequence Dickens tells about Mr. Bounderby’s conditions of life when was a child. Mr. Bounderby tells to his friend, Mr. Gradgrind, in the formal drawing-room of Stone Lodge, that when he was young was very poor and lived in terrible conditions.

Mr. Bounderby represents the perfect model for the Victoria age, because, he was able to become an important and rich man starting from the bottom of society, following the puritan values.

In the third sequence there is a part of showing, in which Mr. Bounderby tells to Mr. Gradgrind that when was a child he was sickly, ragged and dirty and lived in a pigsty and in a ditch. Dickens uses the language in a sarcastic way; for example, when Mr. Bounderby tells that lived in a ditch, Mr. Gradgrind asks him if the ditch was dry.

Mr. Bounderby has a presumptuous character, always intent on remembering that he is a man born from the slums and he has made himself; he is a man without feelings and emotions, and he is used by Dickens to ridicule the idea of moral superiority of the rich.

By the extract emerge the social problems of the Victorian age, like the children’s conditions of life, the great gap between rich and poor and the educative system.

Dickens throughout his irony and sarcasm criticizes utilitarians; the reader can consider Mr. Bounderby an utilitarian, because he thinks only to the facts and doesn’t give importance to moral and spiritual values and emotions. Dickens criticizes and makes in ridiculous Mr. Bounderby’s selfishness. The novelist thinks that utilitarian values ​​in educational institutions promote contempt between industrial owners and workers. Dickens wants to convey that the educative systems haven’t to create new adults with only a materialistic vision based on facts and money, but a good education has to develop the personal creativity and talent.