***TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF “MR.BOUNDERBY”***

The text I’m going to analyze in an extract from chapter 4 of *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens

The novelist uses a dialogue between the protagonist of the chapter and a lady: Mrs. Grundy. She is presented as a stupid woman, which seems pathetic and Mr.Bounderby treats her as she seems like. He tells her the story of his life, for example he remembers that when he was little he spent his birthday in a ditch full of water: he says that he was born in a ditch. Dickens uses pathos to create interest in the protagonist's situation, indeed he is a pathetic victim. The intelligent reader realizes that the all portrait is a caricature, because all the details are exaggeration.

Mr. Bounderby’s characterisation is caricaturized by the use of the grotesque: his age is exaggerated, he looks very ugly and he perfectly corresponds to the exaggerated stereotype of the capitalist and of the self-made man.

There are many expressions that give the idea of an arrogant man: the simile “inflated like a balloon”, the ironical phrase “a man who could never sufficiently vaunt himself a self-made man” (who is also a hide critique to the myth of the middle class who is composed by self-made men), the ironical expression “the Bully of humility” and the analogy “constantly blown about by his windy boastfulness”.

The figure of Mrs. Gradgrind is made nice for the reader by the use of pathos. The description of the extreme situation of poverty she lives makes the reader feel sorry for her and, therefore hate Mr. Bounderby who despises her. The feeling of pity is increased by the fact that she was just a child and she is describing her tenth birthday: she stays alone in a ditch.

It goes without saying that he wants to demonstrate how he was able to grow his social position. Indeed he symbolizes the victory of the Puritan novel, where money success is the demonstration of God's grace. Indeed the is used as the expression of the moral puritan obligation felt by middle classes. This is the reason why at the end of the extract Mr. Bounderby tells to his interlocutor that he became what he is, only thanks to his resources and work. In Mr. Bounderby’s words is clear the mentality that the poor man must work hard to become rich, therefore be poor is guilt, because a poor person is one who not works enough.