PROTEST AGAINST CHILD EXPLOITATION REFLECTED IN CHARLES DICKENS’ *OLIVER TWIST* (1838):
A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

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PROTEST AGAINST CHILD EXPLOITATION REFLECTED IN CHARLES DICKENS’ *OLIVER TWIST* (1838):

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Abstract

This study is about protest against child exploitation. The problem of this study is how protest against child exploitation is reflected in Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*. The object of the study is *Oliver Twist* novel by Charles Dickens. It used sociological approach. This study belongs to qualitative research. In this method, there are two types of data source, namely primary and secondary data source. The primary data source is *Oliver Twist* novel and the secondary data source is other material related to the study. Both data are collected through library research and analyzed by descriptive analysis. The result of the study shows the following conclusion. Based on the analysis it is clear that there is a close relation between structural analysis of this novel and social reality in England in early nineteenth century. Charles Dickens wants to show the protest against child exploitation in England in the early nineteenth century through *Oliver Twist* novel.

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Naskah artikel tersebut, layak dan dapat disetujui untuk dipublikasikan.

Demikian persetujuan yang dibuat, semoga dapat dipergunakan sepenuhnya.

Surakarta, 18 Juli 2014

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A. Introduction

*Oliver Twist* is a novel by written by Charles Dickens in 1838. *Oliver Twist* is one of the most famous novels Charles Dickens. *Oliver Twist* has been the subject of numerous film and television adaptations. This novel tells about orphan children who lived in unsanitary workhouses; children labor and slavery trade was made illegal. The theme of *Oliver Twist* novel is children are among other victims of Industrial Revolution. Dickens creates Oliver Twist as the major character in this novel. He is a young orphan and he live in the workhouse, but in there he get bad treatment and punishment.

Charles John Huffan Dickens was born in Portsmouth, England, on February 7, 1812 until June 9, 1870. He was the second of eight children. Charles Dickens is an English writer and social critic. He created some of the world's most memorable fictional characters and is generally regarded as the greatest novelist of the Victorian period.

“DICKENS’S OLIVER TWIST” by Deutschendorf, Brian.

One of the most important theories to make the rounds in 20th century world politics was the ‘exploitation theory’ proposed by the German Political theorist Karl Marx. Exploitation is a set of social relations on which capitalism is built. Marx’s account of the exploitative relationship of capitalist to labor remains powerfully compelling and seems by many to be vindicated in history. The type of exploitation are exploitative child labour and sexual exploitation. The effects of exploitation on the individual child can give trauma and depression.

B. Research Method

The form of data collected are quantitative method and qualitative method. Qualitative methodologies have not predominated in the social sciences. According to Dabbs (1982, p.32) that qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. On the other hand, Patton and Cochran (2002) stated that qualitative research is characterised by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis.

This study belongs to qualitative method. There are two types of data source, namely primary and secondary data source. The primary data source is the novel Oliver Twist, meanwhile the secondary data sources are other materials related to the study. In analyzing the novel, the writer analyzes the data based on
sociological approach. Focus will be on the protest against child exploitation reflected in Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* and in England society in the early nineteenth century.

**C. Research Finding and Discussion**

The writer gets some research finding in analyzing *Oliver Twist* novel. Each finding has some cases to be discussed. After they have examined, all of components will get back together in a schematic manner in the discussion.

1. **Findings**

In analyzing *Oliver Twist* novel, the writer gets some findings. There are type of child exploitation in *Oliver Twist* novel and child exploitation in reality in England.

a. **Child exploitation in novel *Oliver Twist***

Finally, in analyzing *Oliver Twist* novel, the writer gets some type of child exploitation in *Oliver Twist* novel. There are divided into two, unpaid work in the workhouse and forced criminal.

1) **Unpaid Work**

The type of child exploitation in *Oliver Twist* novel, Charles Dickens describes the life in the workhouses. Oliver spends the first nine years of his life in a workhouse. Here Oliver and other child employ with hard considerably in factory. They are given some eat and treaded without good.
“…With a corn-factor to supply periodically small quantities of oatmeal; and issued three meals of thin gruel a day, with an onion twice a week, and a half of a roll on Sundays” (OT, 1838: 14)

Sometimes, when Oliver require more oatmeal, Oliver gets a punishment in a solitary room for a week before he offer to who wanted an apprentice.

“For a week after the commission of the impious and profane offence of asking for more, Oliver remained a close prisoner in the dark and solitary room to which he had been consigned by the wisdom and mercy of the board” (OT, 1838: 17)

Oliver Twist ever offered to be an apprentice in chimney sweeping for five pounds by Mr. Gamfield. At that time, children as labors were working in iron and coal mines industry, gas works, shipyards, nail factories and business of chimney sweeping.

“Young boys have been smothered in chimneys before now”, said another gentleman” (OT, 1838: 19)

2) Forced Criminal

The type of child exploitation in Oliver Twist novel, Charles Dickens describes when Oliver in the London, he meet Jack Dawkins. After that, Jack ask Oliver to follow him and introducing with Fagin. Fagin is a head master of criminal gang. Fagin hoped Oliver should have the honour of his intimate acquaintance and he wants Oliver to become a thief. So Fagin
teach Oliver to put pocket-handkerchiefs. Women exploitation also happened in London. In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens describes in Betsy and Nancy as who are being type of women exploitation. Fagin makes they into his gang of thief.

b. Child exploitation in Reality

Industrial Revolution in England gave many impacts to society such as high unemployment, rapid urbanization and criminal action at that time (Hoaglind, 1960: 203). Industrialists took children as their labors and the exploitation of child labor begun in England (David Cody, 2008). On the other hand, Alfred (1857), Engels (1926), Marx (1909), and Webb and Webb (1898) argued that children worked under deplorable conditions and were being exploited by the industrialists.

According Yale Levin (Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 1940) the problem which confronted the early reformers, namely, how to overcome the vast mass of child neglect and juvenile crime in the larger cities of England. These children comprised (1)”orphans, or children wholly abandoned by their parents, who, being driven by necessity to small acts of dishonesty in order to obtain food, (2) Children of very destitute parents, who being frequently without food, or wandering in the streets, fall in with bad companions, and are led into the same courses. (3) Children of thieves and other depraved characters, who undergo a regular training in the
arts of picking pockets, etc. and are punished by their parents if they do not bringhome a sufficient booty each day."

2. Discussion

Discussing the relation between the society and literature. Wellek and Warren (1989: 109) state that literature is a social institution, which is using the language as its medium. Besides, literature presents life and it almost consists of the social reality, although the literature itself imitates the nature and subjective aspect of human being (Wellek and Warren, 1989: 112). Thus, *Oliver Twist* novel is reflection of what occured in the early nineteenth century. Specifically, *Oliver Twist* novel is reflected the impact of the Industrial Revolution, which children are the victims of exploitation in child labor.

In the *Oliver Twist* novel, Dickens wants to criticize the social reality in the early nineteenth century in England. Through *Oliver Twist* novel, Dickens states that children do not deserve to be a victim of the Industrial Revolution. They should be protected from activities that harm them. They are parties needs to be guaranteed by the family and government.

D. Conclusion

After analyzing *Oliver Twist* novel, the writer wants to deliver the conclusion. The story of the novel reflects protest against child exploitation.
Based on sociological approach of *Oliver Twist* novel above, the researcher concludes that Charles Dickens as the author of this novel wants to deliver a moral message that children are among other victims of Industrial Revolution. He shows the social reality in early nineteenth century. He wants to satire about the condition in system of law for paupers and child exploitation in order to show the true situation and condition through character’s characterization, narration and dialogue.

Charles Dickens criticizes the social reality in England through the theme, plot and characterization in *Oliver Twist*. The theme of the story is “children are among other victims of Industrial Revolution”. It is reflected in the plot of the novel.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


VIRTUAL REFERENCES


