

**THE SOCIAL INJUSTICE REFLECTED  
IN CHARLES DICKENS'S *A TALE OF TWO CITIES*:  
A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



**RESEARCH PAPER**

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Living in the society is not free from problems. Human being was created to face the problems. There are many problems that always present in the society. Injustice is one of the big problems that exist in the world. Injustice is the phenomena in the society. In the real life injustice can be seen in a society, the injustice varies such as the political injustice, economical injustice and social injustice.

Social injustice is concept relating to the perceived unfairness or injustice of society in its division of rewards and burdens. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_injustice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_injustice)). The concept is distinct from those justices in law, which may not be considered moral in practice. Opposition to social injustice is increasingly a platform of emerging political parties. Social injustice arises when equality treated unequally.

The problem of the social injustice is phenomena in of life that deals with condition of the society that perceived unfairness or the situation that peoples do not getting their due. Each time someone cheats you out of what you deserve, there has been injustice. Other people can treat you unjustly. But at least your tormentors normally are working in their own self-interest. They are not pretending to be fair, or to be working on your behalf. When your own

government acts unjustly, it is all the more galling. The Injustice Line will focus mainly on injustices committed by the government, especially those arising from the court system. The condition above is appearing the problem of the social injustice.

Meanwhile, in the literary works the author may take a certain world which then represents his ideas. An author, in his works can present a portrait of social, politic and economy during a particular time. When the literary work indicates a reflection or portrait, the characters in a fiction often indicated or reflect the presence of the similar social attitude to that in the society during their time. The portrait represented in a literary work show the relation between the social reality and the literature itself. Then, the author purposes it as real illustration or merely a caricature.

Literature is reflection of social realities and condition of social being in the society. It means that literature cannot be free from the social issue around the society. In edition, literature is closely related to the sociology science that reflects the phenomena happening in the society. "Literature and sociology are not wholly distinct disciplines but on contrary, complement each other in our understanding of society". (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1972: 20)

Charles Dickens states the novel by analyzing injustice and the condition of the society. He is the great novelist in Victorian era. Charles Dickens was born of February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1812 in Landport division of Porsea, England. He was

the second child and the oldest son of John and Elizabeth Dickens. During his childhood Charles Dickens lived in poverty. His fate became worse then since his father, John Dickens, was imprisoned for unsolved debt earthily was living in London and Dickens who twelve years old, went to work in a factory for making boot blacking. He bitterly presented having to leave school to do unskilled work from of this kind, feeling that he would never have the change of doing well in life. When he was fifteen, he became a clerk in a lawyer's office. Dickens grew as an ambitious figure and he went on his own education, reading as much as he could he also taught himself shorthand and as the result he was soon as an expert shorthand writer. Such skill then led him become a reporter in the law courts, taking down the political speeches for newspaper. The real beginning of his career as author came in 1836. At the time he wrote the *Pickwick Paper*, which he developed and became his first novel *Picwick*. This was foundation of his career as an author until he succeeded creating a large number of novels: *Oliver Twist* (1837), *Nicolas Nickleby* (1838), *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840), *He Battles Life* (1846), *Hard Times* (1854), *Little Dorrit* (1855), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) and so on. *A Tale of Two Cities* is a part of historical novel, the background of the novel is French Revolution. This novel narrates aspect of major historical event the French Revolution the story focussed on the effect of political upheaval more than on character development. *A Tale of Two Cities* related to the class struggle because those who feel the negative effects of social injustice begin to struggle against it. Dickens maintains a complex perspective on the French Revolution

because although he did not particularly sympathize with the gruesome and often irrational results, he certainly sympathized with the unrest of the lower orders of society. Dickens vividly paints the aristocratic maltreatment of the lower classes, such as when Monseigneur only briefly stops to toss a coin toward the father of a child whom he has just run over. Because the situation in France was so dire, Dickens portrays the plight of the working class in England as rather difficult, though slightly less difficult than in other works such as *Hard Times* or *Oliver Twist*, which also emphasize social injustice.

Shortly talking *A Tale of Two Cities* is very interesting. In order to know the social injustice in *A Tale of Two Cities* is use Sociological Approach, in this study the researcher encourages himself to give a title: **“The Social Injustice Reflected in Charles Dickens’s *A Tale Of Two Cities*: A Sociological Approach”**.

## **B. Previous Study**

After holding the research Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, and IKIP PGRI University of Semarang, the researcher finally fined the study concerning with the Charles Dickens’s “*A Tale of Two Cities*”. The researcher believes that must be the other researchers who has conducted and analyzed the novel, because *A Tale of Two Cities* is written by one of the great English novelists. The other researcher who has analyzed the Charles Dickens “*A Tale of Two Cities*” is Srianto Loroati, a student of IKIP PGRI University of Semarang.

He emphasizes on the reflection of the story of the novel one in the history. His title for his research is *The French Revolution As Portrayed in Charles Dickens "A Tale of Two Cities"*

### **C. Problem Statement**

The major problem of the study is: "How is the social injustice reflected in Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*?"

### **D. Limitation of the Study**

In this research, the researcher will focus on the social injustice reflected in Charles Dickens's *"A Tale of Two Cities"*

### **E. Objective of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the structural element of the novel
2. To analyze the novel based on sociological perspective.

### **G. Benefit of the Study**

The benefits of the study are as follows:

#### **1. Theoretical Benefit**

This study is expected to give contribution to other literary researchers, especially in study of Charles Dickens's work.

#### **2. Practical Benefit**

This research is expected to able to give deeper understanding for the researcher about the content of the novel that consists of structural elements which is viewed from sociological perspective.

## **H. Research Method**

### **1. Objective of the Study**

The object of the study is Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* novel published in England by Penguin Popular Classic 1994.

### **2. Type of the Data and the Data Source**

The type of data is text, while the data sources are divided into two kinds:

#### **a. Primary data source**

The primary sources of data are the literary work itself that consist of words, phrases, and sentence.

#### **b. Secondary data source**

The secondary sources of data are books of literary criticism, and articles on the internet.

### **3. Technique of the Data Collection**

The technique of data collection in this study is library research. It consists of some steps, as follows:

#### **a. Reading the novel rapidly and tries to imagine to understand the novel**

#### **b. Identifying the data**

- c. Takes notes and underlines the important words, phrases of sentence, which are related to the study
- d. Classifying the data into some categories

#### **4. Technique for Analyzing Data**

The technique of data analysis of the research is descriptive analysis. In this case, the researcher tries to describe the structural elements of the novel and sociological analysis. Hence, the collected data will be interpreted and analyzed in detail through the appropriate approach, in this case is sociological approach to show the social injustice reflected Charles Dickens's "*A Tale of Two Cities*" with Sociological Approach

#### **I. Research Paper Organization**

To make it easy to understand, the writer arranges the research paper into six chapters. The first chapter is introduction that consists of the background of the study, literature review, the problem statement, and the objectives of study, limitation of study, benefit of the study, structural elements of novel, theoretical approach, research method, and research paper organization. The second chapter deals with underlying theory covering with the notion of sociology, the major principle of sociological perspective, the structural elements of the novel, and theoretical application. The third chapter is present the social historical background. The fourth chapter is structural analysis. In this chapter, the writer explains the structural elements of the novel. The fifth chapter is sociological analysis. The sixth chapter is the conclusion and suggestion.