

REPRESSIVE IDEOLOGIES OF THE RULING CLASS AND SINCLAIR'S IDEOLOGY IN *THE FLIVVER KING: A STORY OF FORD AMERICA*

By:

Diah Kurniasari
Yogyakarta State University
akudiah12@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aims to identify and analyze repressive ideologies unconsciously approved by the society reflected in Upton Sinclair's *The Flivver King: A Story of Ford America* and to reveal Sinclair's ideology in the novel. To answer the objectives of the research, the researcher used the theory of ideology by Karl Marx which is discussed in *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* Book by Lois Tyson. This research employed a descriptive-qualitative method using content analysis technique. The main source of the research was a novel entitled *The Flivver King: A Story of Ford America* by Upton Sinclair which was published in 1999 by Charles H. Kerr. The data were some words, phrases, clauses, sentences and expressions related to the research topic. The data were analyzed through six steps: identifying, reading and re-reading, categorizing, sorting the data, analyzing and evaluating the data, and making an interpretation of the findings. The trustworthiness of the data was achieved through reading and re-reading the data, providing rich and thick description and conducting triangulation via investigators. The findings of the research show that there are three repressive ideologies that are internalized in the minds of society; American Dream, commodification and consumerism, which lead to unfavorable social and economical conditions. From the analysis, it can be concluded that Sinclair's ideology is on the side of the proletariat. By displaying the negative roles of the repressive socioeconomic ideologies, positive images of the proletariat, and anti-capitalist behaviors. Sinclair wants the readers to blame the system and reject capitalism.

Keywords: Ideology, The Flivver King, Sinclair, Repressive Ideology

BACKGROUND

In this modern era, literature is accessible for all. People can get books that they want to read easily. As the result, reading literature still becomes a hobby that offers a pleasant activity. Literature has creative imagination and artistic form that can amuse as well as give some lessons and experiences (Graham, 1997: 128). However, those positive values make people insensible and unaware that literature also embodies certain ideologies.

In Marxist perspectives, ideology is a set of beliefs and ideas about how men perceive their cultural condition where they live (Eagleton, 1976:v). Those certain beliefs and values are obtainable in literature since literature itself is product of the concrete social relations into which authors enter at a particular time and place.

However, ideologies in literature are not easy to be noticed as they sometimes come in repressive forms or in natural ways of seeing the world. Tyson (2006:56) says that this kind of ideology is undesirable and dangerous because

they prevent people from true understanding. In the nineteenth century England, literature is used as a tool to reinforce repressive ideology to society for example, *Frankenstein* written by Mary Shelley which evidently supports classist ideology. By reading the novel, the readers unconsciously will accept those ideology that spreads the belief that people with high class status are superior to the lower class and make readers blind that the classist ideology actually brings disadvantages for the lower class people. In this way, literature has significant contributions in shaping and directing people's lives and it is also an important mean to spread ideology to the society.

Ideology in literature is real but invisible. Authors play a central role in the process of making a literary work since they can either intentionally or unintentionally insert ideology through their work. They can articulate their ideas about what they believe in order to influence people.

Besides Mary Shelley, another example of writers who uses literature as a medium to convey their particular ideology is Upton Sinclair(Jensen, 2000, par 35). He is a famous American author who produced more than ninety literary works in his life time. One of his exceptional works is *The Flivver King a Story of Ford-America*. The novel stole the attentions of American society since it bravely told the story of one of the most popular figures in the Second Industrial era who cannot be forgotten in the mind of the American society and the world. In this novel Upton Sinclair used Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motor Company as the major character in his novel. The novel

depicts vividly the different pictures between the life of Henry Ford and the lives of Abner Shutt's family and other Ford's workers.

In general, the novel depicts primarily economic and social condition of America after the Second industrial revolution. It exposes economic pictures and social conflicts that arise following the triumph of Henry Ford to provide and advertise massive fabrication of inexpensive cars to American society. In the novel, Sinclair tries to criticize American capitalism specifically Ford's Company that brings despairs and grieves to his workers.

As the part of American culture, the novel was popular in its era since it was classified as a muckraking novel, exposing the horrible reality in industry and business that became a trend in American literature at that time. Unfortunately, today the novel does not impress the new America generations. It is also not widely read even by the Americans. Many people claim that the novel has bold political message and consider the novel as propaganda. In fact Sinclair only tried to reveal and capture the truth about people's lives under capitalist system and culture as what he experienced as American. He explored both the victory and the failure of people who lived in fierce capitalism. Hence, this research intends to reveal the ideologies embodied in the novel either the repressive ideologies of the ruling class that approved by the society in the novel and Sinclair's ideology as the author of the novel. The novel is still worth to be read and studied since it is a cultural production of America that was born at the most important era in the United States. Understanding the novel may contribute

on the study of American society especially about its people and values.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research employed a descriptive qualitative method since the data were in the form of words and texts rather than numbers. To analyze the data, the researcher used qualitative content analysis in order to have clear interpretations and understand the meaning of the text.

The data of this research were in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences which in line with the research topic. Then, the main source of this research is *The Flivver King a Story of Ford-America*, a novel written by Upton Sinclair. It was first published in 1937. The researcher used the second edition of the novel from Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company (1999) which consists of 119 pages.

This research also used the secondary data in the form of books, articles, e-books, and website related to the topic discussed in this research. This research used the Karl Marx's theory of Ideology taken from Lois Tyson's *Critical Theory Today: A User-friendly Guide* 2nd edition (2006) as the main theory and some additional books on Marxist study were also used to support the analysis process.

The researcher used some steps to analysis the data as described below:

1. Organizing and identifying the data from the novel by note-taking
2. Rereading through all the data in order to gain deep information about the data in which related to topic is clearly reflected.

3. Categorizing the data by classifying all data into some categories and sub-categories.

4. Selecting the relevant data and excluding the irrelevant data. Adding a description for each relevant data.

5. Analysing the data based the theoretical framework to evaluate the data and to get the findings.

6. Making an interpretation of the findings based on the researcher's comprehension about the theory.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Flivver King a Story of Ford America shows that the story is set in America in the early of the twentieth century. From the setting of time and place of story, it can be identified that its social setting is a capitalist society. The fact that capitalist society as the social setting of the novel is marked by 1) the rise of industrialization and modern technologies; 2) the ownership of private property and the establishment of giant factory; 3) divisions of labor; 4) fierce business competition; 5) high standard of living

After discovering the social setting of the novel that is a capitalist society, the class structures that come up from the social relation can be identified. There are two socioeconomic classes exist in the novel, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie is represented by Henry Ford. On the other hand, the characters who live as the members of proletariat class are Shut's family and other Ford's workers. As the bourgeoisie, Henry Ford owns and controls the factory and labors which lead him to get more

economic power rather than Shut family who can only sell their labor for Mr. Ford.

From these class structures, the social relation among the characters can be discovered in order to reveal ideologies that are expressed in the novel especially the repressive ideologies of the ruling class and Sinclair's ideology as the author.

A. The Repressive Ideologies of the Ruling Class Which Bring Unfavorable Social and Economic Conditions

According to Tyson (2006:56) ideology refers to a belief system that is created and conditioned culturally by society. There are two kinds of ideologies that appear in a society. The first is non repressive ideology which allows people to know exactly and claim clearly that it is an ideology, for example Marxism. The second is repressive ideology which always appears as natural way of seeing the world. Repressive ideology develops false consciousness that can mask the reality and blind people to see their true situations which its functions to serve the interest of those in power and to keep the acceptance of people to the ruling power system. The belief that man is superior to woman is an example of repressive ideology. In the novel, the researcher found that American Dream, commodification, and consumerism are three capitalist ideologies that dominate the society.

1. American Dream

American Dream as ideology tells that the key to open the opportunity to be successful and prosperous is through hard work. All people have an equal opportunity to achieve financial success in America as long as they are willingly to work hard.

a. American Dream as the Value of the Society

Through the novel, it can be seen that the society has been programmed to acknowledge American Dream as the common belief of the society. It shows how family, media, and the institution contribute in directing people's mind to accept and adopt this ideology which determines their behavior as American.

To shows how media take a part in reinforcing and planting this ideology to its subscribers and constructing the mental of the society with American Dream can be found in the quotation below:

Even toil-battered Tom Shutt knew this. He had a newspaper delivered to his home every Sunday morning, and after he came back from church and had his dinner, he read it until he fell asleep. **In this paper he saw pictures of fashionable ladies and fabulously rich and successful men. The papers told how these men had risen from a state of poverty like his own, and that he had done it by producing useful things which had raised the standards of life in America until they were in the highest in the world.** (Printed in bold mine)

(Sinclair, 1999:5)

The evidence above shows how the weekly newspapers that Tom Shut, the father of Abner reads always contain articles which provide and support American Dream by posing some inspiring stories of successful business men. The fact that media feeds the society with such stories, the newspaper teaches people to believe that poor people have an opportunity to be a rich person like those wealthy figures. With the appearances of those articles media tries to internalize the ideology American Dream to its subscribers or society in general. Thus, media is responsible for

inserting America Dream in the mind of the society.

b. The Operation of American Dream as Repressive Ideology

By posing the belief that everyone has the same right to get financial freedom through hard work, it influences people to focus on achieving wealth. It emphasizes on individual achievement. For American, success is admirable and highly-valued. The one who makes the most money is the most respectable man for the society

1.) To Keep the Society Behave According What America Dream Told

American Dream is an ideology that influences people to have desire in getting rich. Inevitably, it makes people only concern for making money in their lives since money plays big roles in the society. In the *Flivver King* shows that all the characters have the same goal that is to be rich.

As a poor worker, Abner always works diligently for the company and has great responsibility toward his jobs.

“ I been workin’ for you three years now Mr. Ford, an’ never missed a day exceptin’ that time when I got married. I told you to count on me, an’ you said if I was faithfully an’ worked hard, I’d better myself. That’s what I want to ast you, Mr. Ford-Abner rushed on breathlessly, for this was his real message, the part that filled him with terror-... (Printed in bold mine)

(Sinclair, 1999:18)

The quotation above shows that Abner is hard-working man. He is very discipline, and industrious. He always comes to the factory to devote his labor and time loyally to fulfill the

production of Ford’s company. However, Abner has a reason behind his faithful service in the factory that is his believe in American Dream. He has been told that if he works hard, he will get a better life. Thus, it is American Dream that inspires Abner to always give his best service and performances for Ford’s company. By doing well in factory he hopes to get higher position in the factory. He works very hard in the factory because he wants to escape from poverty, to buy a house for his family and to be a respectable man. All Abner’s efforts show how he wants to be ideal as the member of American society.

2.) America Dream Blurs the Reality

America dream is a repressive ideology that is conditioned by capitalist culture which leads the poor accept a system that is unfavorable for them (Tyson, 2006:58). Its role is to secure the power of the dominant class (the bourgeoisie or the rich). America Dream that creates an illusion that everyone has a right to be rich and prosperous by working hard in his/her life develops false consciousness to the working class. It prevents people to see their true conditions and makes them ignore the unequal relationship that happens between them.

To see the power of America Dream that blurs the reality of the working class can be seen in the scene when Abner and his father have a fantasy if they were Mr. Ford who made and produced cars. America Dream prevents them to see the turth that to achieve success is not only need hardworking but also depends on their background and capabilities.

They went back in their memories to that day when they had gone together, Abner a

little boy, to watch Mr. Ford trying out his steering-rudder in front of Bagley Street shed. **It had become the proudest memory of their lives, the one they talked about most frequently to everybody knew. If only they had realized the future locked up in the baby carriage with an engine; if only they had hitched their wagon to Henry Ford's car! They figured up how much money they had had in the savings bank in those days; if they had invested it in the stock of Ford Motor Company, how much they would have now.** (Printed in bold mine)

(Sinclair, 1999:49)

After Henry Ford gets the success in his automobile business, Abner and his father are wondering if the fortune of Mr. Ford comes to them. They imagine that they are the one who has the idea of making cars and they invest their money in Ford Motor Company. From this imaginative thought, it shows how America Dream works to prevent Abner and his father from seeing their harsh reality. They do not notice about their own situation that in reality they are poor while Mr. Ford comes from rich farmer family, thus it is possible for Mr. Ford to get success in making cars and selling them.

They ignore the fact that to start in producing cars they need a lot of money and need great skills about machinery which they do not have. They think that they have the same opportunity like Mr. Ford who is rich. They place themselves equal with Mr. Ford which actually not. Therefore, America Dream continues to stir Abner and his father since it offers a hope which makes them unrealized their real condition. American Dream offers a slight of hope that people want to hear, thus it makes people are only busy in believing it (Tyson (2006: 58).

American Dream that makes Abner believing the value of hardworking and keeps him working hard to serve the production of cars for Ford Company. Although Abner and other Ford's workers work very hard and well in factory and even they ever experience middle-class lifestyle, in the end they still end up in the powerless position with indefinite future. For Shutt family and the working class, America Dream is only a lie that makes them stay in their miserable condition. It shows how America Dream is very powerful as ideology within the society. American Dream becomes an effective tool to lead the society accept their repressive socioeconomic system.

2. Commodification

Since capitalism is a system that values everything in term of its worth in money, it leads commodification (Tyson, 2006:62). Commodification is the act of relating to persons or things in terms of their exchange value or sign-exchange value.

a. Commodification as the Value of the Society

Commodification is another capitalist value that is naturally approved by the society in the novel. In this culture, people see everything as commodity which can be traded for their own convenience or benefits like what it is said below.

An ugly world, shocking to know about; **as bad as the top as at the bottom, according to Hank. The police were crooked, the political game was a sell-out, if you had the cash you could buy anything and anybody.** (Printed in bold mine)

(Sinclair, 1999:62)

It is Hank's statement about the condition of his society which shows that the act of turning

things as an object of trade is a common issue for the society. Even something that is actually not for sale can be commercialized in this culture since the orientation of the society is money. Here, it proves that commodification becomes the part of the society.

b. The Acts of Commodification

The novel illustrates commodification both in the form of exchange value and sign-exchange value.

1.) Commodification in the Form of Exchange Value

One of the characters in the novel that clearly displays commodification is Mr. Ford, the wealthy man in the novel. He values everything around him in term of its monetary worth. As a capitalits, Mr. Ford commodifies his workers badly. Mr. Ford's commodification of his workers can be seen through poor treatments that the workers must experience in the factory. Mr. Ford commodifies his workers in four issues. They are speeding up the belt, providing unsafe workplace, firing and reducing the wage.

Mr. Ford displays commodification of his workers through his ignorance about the situation on his factory. He does not hire men to give him a loss but for their exchange-values. He sacrifices the lives of his workers in order to minimize the expense of the production of cars. He puts his workers in danger by forcing them to work in bad and unsecure factory without any safety.

The twenty-five thousand workers were driven until they went out "punch-drunk". Sometimes one went out on a stretcher, because men so driven couldn't handle machinery without accidents. On no subject had Henry

written more eloquently than the important of safety; but again and **again his "safety department" was overruled by his speed-up department, and there was a saying in the plant that it took one life a day. They had their own hospital, and there was no way to get any figures.** (Printed in bold mine)

(Sinclair, 1999: 81)

A factory where machines and tools are in everywhere is a dangerous place since accidents can happen unexpectedly to the workers. In addition, the workers must do their jobs in unhealthy and polluted workplace. However, Mr. Ford's safety department has no concerns and solutions about the poor conditions of the factory rather than they concern in the way to speed-up the labor. This fact shows that Mr. Ford wants to get maximum profit in doing his business and he turns his back on the well-being of all his workers. It indicates that Mr. Ford commodifies his workers heartlessly by taking advantages over others for his own convenience. Tyson (2006:56) says that repressive ideology that appears as natural way of seeing the world creates false consciousness which prevents people to see the true situation. Similar with other repressive ideologies, commodification also develops that kind of ability. To show the facts that commodification creates false consciousness to Abner and others workers can be seen through the worker's acceptance with the harsh realities in the factory.

The workers can not see at all that they are the victims of Mr. Ford's commodification. Commodification makes the social relation between Henry Ford as the capitalist and his workers who produce cars for Ford seems alright, fair and normal which is actually oppressive and

unjust. The secret behind the acceptance of workers with Mr. Ford's commodifications that lead to oppressive situation are in Mr. Ford's ability to manipulate his workers in the factory through his words "men work for money" that keep ringing in the ears of his workers and the wages itself, money as commodity sign that is handed to the workers.

Such were the task which kept him on the move the whole day; **but he didn't mind- he was getting seventeen and a half cents per hours, the best he had ever done,...** (Printed in bold mine)

(Sinclair, 1999:16)

The data imply that Abner as a Ford's worker feels alright and tolerates everything including cruel treatments and strict regulations that they experience and face in factory without a protest as long as Mr. Ford give them pay-check. Abner's endurance indicates that he accepts the harsh realities in the factory. It is the power of commodification which can make people blind to see their unfavorable conditions that keeps Abner doing so. Instead recognizing that workers are the victims of Mr. Ford's commodification, Abner think that he works for his own sake rather than for Mr. Ford. For Abner, all those experiences are the prices that he must pay for the exchange of his pay-check.

2.) **Commodification in the Form of Sign-Exchange Value**

Commodification is relating a person or thing not only in term of money but also in term of social status its ownership confers (Tyson, 2006:69).

Annabelle, Johnny's wife treats everything as a commodity. She relates to her relationships with people in the term of the social

status that they give to her. She socializes only with the middle-class and upper class people.

It was a hierarchy of rank based on income. **Annabelle associated with wives of her own level, carefully avoided those of lower levels, and crudely and persistently sought access to those of higher levels.** Below her were the serfs of industry, the hordes of wage-earners; above her were higher executives, and at the top the owners, the ineffable, godlike one incessantly, gleaning scraps of gossip and cherishing them like jewels. (Printed in bold mine)

(Sinclair, 1999: 73)

Annabelle refuses to have any interaction with lower class people because she is afraid that it will ruin her social position which she still maintains. She makes a friend only with middle class and the higher class because it will give her a sign of "being respectable" like them. It is also a way to build a good connection that can rise her social status. Annabelle's attitude implies that she relates her relationship with other people in term of social status they give to her.

Commodification, the act of relating people or things in term of sign-values also develops false consciousness to people. Since people are conditioned to relate their relationship with people is to get sign-exchange value, it influences the middle class sides with the wealthy and tends to resent the poor. Because of her commodified view of life, Annabelle has no respect with his husband's father and brother who are belong to lower class. Commodification makes them fail to realize that actually they are on the same boat with the poor. It creates separation and damages the relation between middle-class and the lower class. Thus, the middle and lower class can not unite against the one who hold the power. Tyson (2006:58) claims

that the function of false consciousness is to serve the interest of those in power. Commodification gives benefit to the wealthy to maintain their domination in the society and give no way to the poor to achieve success and freedom.

Money is the ultimate goal for the society, thus commodification is believed as an acceptable attitude that allows people to take advantages over others. With this capitalist value, the poor will never be the winner. They will be only the victim of class oppression since they have nothing to trade for. Commodification also leads people to be immoral, cruel and selfish. Mr. Ford who is kind and friendly turns to be ruthless and bad-tempered since capitalism drives people to think only about money as the most precious thing in the world and undervalue the other valuable things such as humanity, justice and brotherhood.

3. Consumerism

Consumerism is an ideology that tells the self-image of an individual depends on what she or he buys and consumes (Tyson, 2006: 60). It motivates people to have great possession of goods and makes people never satisfy with what they have. People are convinced that the possession of goods is a way to build a social status and happiness.

a. Consumerism as The Value of the Society

In capitalist society which the accumulation of wealth is the concern of the people, people measure their self-worth by the money and material possessions. Thus, people are convinced that purchasing of goods or commodities is a good thing to do as it gives them the symbol of

happiness and freedom. To show that the society in the novel believes in consumerism can be seen in this quotation below.

Alas, it was something else to spend Abner's bonus money on. **A hard thing to hold on to money in this free and easy-spending land !** (Printed in bold mine) (Sinclair, 1999: 35)

As the capitalist who need to sell his cars, Mr. Ford also needs to influence the minds of the people with this ideology. Mr. Ford tries to internalize the ideology of consumerism which gives people an illusion that buying expensive things makes them feel as good as the wealthy. Thus, people will motivate and continue to purchase goods. Through media, people are conditioned to believe in consumerism.

The "New Capitalism" was blooming like sunflowers, and money was almost free. The Flivver King gave one of his rough and ready newspaper interviews, in which he said that **nowadays a young man wouldn't get rich by saving his money, but by spending it. "Two cars in every garage and two chickens in every pot" agreed Herbert Hoover.** (Printed in bold mine) (Sinclair, 1999: 72)

In his interviews that are published on the newspaper, Mr. Ford states that the best way to use the money is not to save it on the bank but to spend it. Moreover, in the interviews, the president of America, Herbert Hoover adds that having two cars in house and two chickens in every plate are the ideal of standard of living in America. As two important people, what they say will be very influential to the people. From those statements shows that they encourage people to have a faith in consumerism.

b. The Consumptive Behaviors

As the value of the society, people can not help but accept consumerism. Abner who is the member of the society unconsciously learns this ideology from his society and makes him interested in buying nice things and in attainment of material goods. The ideology of consumerism in the head that tells Abner to change his old second-hand car to a new one and it is also consumerism that influences John to get a new car for himself.

Five days in the week, rain or shine, winter or summer, Abner's flivver came chugging to the Highland Park plant; **he had a better one now, for the price was down to \$ 300 , and any workingman with a job could get one on monthly payments. Johnny had a brand new one of his own, which made the Shutt a "two-car family"-a great distinction, according to the motor car ads.** (Printed in bold mine) (Sinclair, 1999: 61)

Abner's first car is still working but he is no longer driving in that car. Instead, he wants to be up to date by buying a new car. Not a long after Johnny working with Mr. Ford, he also makes up his mind to buy the newest model of Ford's car. They feel good having two cars in the garage as what the advertisement advices to them. They believe that purchasing new cars can give them a sign of self-improvement. For them, the possessions of goods can give him new identity or sense of self. That is why they always feel insecure with what they have and keeping to update their car with the new and better one.

As an ideology, consumerism have two ideological purposes, the first it creates a natural vision which gives people an illusion that makes people can feel good about themselves by having

expensive things as what the wealthy buy and the second, it fills the coffers of the capitalists who sell things. (Tyson, 2006: 60). Consumerism prevents people for seeing their true condition that actually they are oppressed by others.

Consumerism successfully enslaves the minds of Abner and his family to continue buying the newest cars and choose to buy large house although they know that they only have little money to live. Abner buys a car for achieving self-interest rather than for the utility. Consequently, his priorities are mix up and he is oppressed economically. Abner agrees to take risk and goes deeply into debt in order to get cars and the house. He must cut the other living costs to pay the debt plus its interest every month which is very disadvantages for him. To repeat, he does not spend his money wisely. Actually, it is better for him having a car as long as the car can run smoothly and a house that is not too big and too expensive for his family.

As repressive ideology, consumerism serves the interest of those in power (Tyson, 2006: 60). The one who is the most benefit when Abner or the other people spend their money for purchasing cars is Mr. Ford. The more he sells the cars, the more the money he gets.

Consumerism influences people to spend their money freely and carelessly on the things that in the reality they are not too necessary. It is the power of consumerism as repressive ideology that can deceive people to see themselves as the ways the capitalist or bourgeoisie wants them to see it which allows the powerful to remain in control (Tyson, 2006:63). With this ideology, the rich can encourage the poor keep wasting their money for buying the products that are produced

by the rich. In other words, the consumptive behaviors bring money for the rich but misery for the poor.

B. Sinclair's Ideology Concerning with the Power Structure within the Society

Considering that literature as the product of culture is the result of socioeconomic and ideological conditions, to understand literature Marxist critics must understand the historical context in which it was written. They need to be aware the ideology of its author as one who reflect the views of group of people. The goal of Marxist critics is to reveal the ideology in a literary work. They need to analyze how that ideology supports or undermines the socioeconomic system in which that work enacts (Tyson, 2006:66). Based on the previous analysis, from the social and class relations that are formed shows that Sinclair is on the side of the proletariat. His sympathy toward the proletariat can be noticed in three ways.

1. Presenting the Evils of Capitalism

Sinclair's novel criticizes American capitalist culture and ideologies by illustrating the harsh social realities of living in that culture and revealing the harmful effects of capitalist ideologies. Through his story, Sinclair wants the readers to reject the socioeconomic ideologies; America Dream, commodification, and consumerism that are approved by the people in which legitimize them.

The bank account of the bourgeoisie, Mr Ford is not endangered by the capitalist ideologies that emphasize the importance of getting rich and accumulating wealth. However, the proletariat, The Shutt's family and other

Ford's workers suffer the most damage from those ideologies. The proletariat are oppressed effectively. The proletariat live in miserable economic conditions and in heavy social pressures. They compete for jobs and social mobility, they deal with cruel treatments in factory, they have limited opportunities in many aspects of lives and they urge to shop expensive things. In other words, those ideologies play negative roles in the proletariat's lives and only serve for the benefits of the bourgeoisie

2. Showing Positive Images of the Proletariat

Giving positive images of the proletariat characters is Sinclair's strategy to show his sympathy toward the proletariat. He depicts some of the major characters with the images that operate against the stereotypes of the proletariat. Abner is a kind, religious and hardworking man who shows great responsibility as a husband and worker. John, Daisy, and Tommy are hard workers, well-educated and skilled. All of them have tired the best for their lives but sadly they only become the victims of the society. Knowing this fact, the readers may feel sorry with them and blame or angry at the system that victimize them.

With those three operations clearly shows that Sinclair's standpoint concerning the power structure that addressed in the novel is in the position with the proletariat. Sinclair tries to invite the readers to reject capitalism and encourage them to resist the oppressive socioeconomic system.

3. Displaying Anticapitalist Behaviors

Sinclair's support for the proletariat is also can be seen in the way how the social conflict is resolved. Because of the repressive

economic system, the working class characters finally display anti-capitalism behavior. The oppressions and harsh situations inspire the class consciousness, the condition in which the poor aware with the injustice and their powerless positions.

There is a time when Abner also recognizes their unfavorable situations. One day, he joins a group of Ford workers to make protest and tell their demands in front of the gate of Ford plant which cause some of the workers die, injury and stop in hospital.

Even in the story, the winner is Mr. Ford, the incident can convince the readers to become more sympathetic toward the proletariat. The readers can see how in this repressive system, the wealthy Mr. Ford is very powerful and privileged. In the opposite, the poor is powerless and oppressed. Thus, the novel can remind them the importance of unity for the working class and the importance of struggle for better future which signifies the ideology of socialism.

In addition, Sinclair tries to invite reader to be sympathetic toward the proletariat because Sinclair himself was a proletariat and a socialist who used his personal experiences as the source of his writings. Thus, the novel is told in his perspective as the member of proletariat class. With the three operations above and Sinclair's background information, it can be ensured that Sinclair's ideology is on the side of the proletariat. Through the novel, Sinclair purposely wants readers to blame the system and encourages them to reject capitalism.

CONCLUSION

There are there repressive ideologies which only bring unfavorable socio and economic

conditions to people that are found in the text, American Dream, commodification and consumerism. Sinclair's ideology or standpoint concerning with the power structure within the society can be identified that he is on the side of the proletariat. Sinclair wants the readers feel sympathy to the proletariat, then blame the system and encourages reader to change the oppressive socioeconomic system. In other word, Through *The Flivver King a Story of Ford America*, Sinclair purposely wants the readers to reject capitalism.

REFERENCES

Printed References:

- Bressler, Charles.E. 1999.*Literary Criticis: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Eagleton, T. 1976. *Marxist and Literary Criticism*. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.
- _____, 1991. *Ideology : An Introduction*. London: Verso
- Etzioni, Amitai.2009. "Spent: America After Consumerism". The New Republic: Journal Impact History Vol. 10. 240
- Graham, Gordon. 1997. *Philosophy of The Arts: An Introduction to Aesthetic*. London:Routledge
- Jensen, Carl. 2000. "Upton Sinclair". Seven Stories. <http://www.uptonsinclair.com/bio.html>. Monday 15, June.2015
- Sinclair, Upton. 1999. *The Flivver King A Story of Ford America*. Chicago:Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company.
- Selden, Raman and Peter Widdowson. 1993.*A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*.Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsh
- Tyson, L. 2006. *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (2nd Ed.). New York: Routledge
- _____.2001.*Learning for a Diverse World:Using Critical Theory to Read and Write About Literature*.NewYork: Routledge
- Vanderstoep, S.W& Johnston.D.D. 2009. *Research Methods For Everyday Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.