
A Genetic Structuralism Analysis of Materialism in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *A Little Princess*

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ABSTRACT

Although the Industrial Revolution in Britain's Victorian era contributed significantly toward Britain's development, it also led to the emergence of materialism issues in society. This research aims to identify how materialism was constructed and to reveal the worldview on materialism expressed in *A Little Princess* (2017). Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism is operated in this qualitative research. The results indicate that the materialism issue brought some adverse impacts or social problems, such as the division of social classes, the social gap between the upper, middle, and working classes, and child labor in the Victorian age. Besides, the worldview of Burnett's social group resisted materialism by delineating these social issues and a binary opposition between a materialistic character shown by Miss Minchin and a non-materialistic character presented by Sara. Through the binary opposition, Burnett wanted readers to be aware of the negative impacts of practicing materialistic traits such as possessiveness, envy, and non-generosity. Possessiveness is shown by Miss Minchin's desire and attitude to retain all of Sara's luxury stuff. Envy appears in Miss Minchin's envy of Sara's wealth and prosperity. Non-generosity as Miss Minchin hard to donate her possessions or do charity. As a human fact product, *A Little Princess* can be interpreted as a view to getting a better life for poor child workers at that time.

Keywords: *A Little Princess*, materialism, Industrial Revolution, Victorian Britain, Goldman's Genetic Structuralism

INTRODUCTION

The Victorian Age was a period in Britain that led to Queen Victoria's reign from 1837 until 1901. It was marked by Britain's prosperity, high national British self-confidence, and Britain's glory internationally. There were many prominent features during this age. One of them was Britain reached the Industrial Revolution climax. It contributed significantly to Britain's wealth, prosperity, technological, socioeconomic, cultural, and educational development (Rathod, 2019: 3-4).

During the Industrial Revolution, Britain produced many goods that gave many advantages and prosperity to Britain. It caused a paradigm in viewing

benefit and prosperity that was oriented to the goods, such as money and precious things, which are physical or material goods (Miranda & Snower, 2020: 1). Consequently, the British turned out to be fixated on material things. Additionally, prosperity oriented to material goods emerged as a materialistic idea in British society, which was also one of the negative impacts of the Industrial Revolution (Haque, Islam, & Tohfa, 2018: 1).

Collins Dictionary (2023) defines *materialism* as "a devotion to material needs and desire, to neglect spiritual matters, a way of life, opinion, or tendency based entirely upon material interests."

Further, materialism is a human tendency that assigns worldly possessions to a central place in a person's life to achieve the most excellent satisfaction. Hence, a materialistic individual tends to gain more material possessions (e.g., money, cars, and jewelry) instead of spiritual values (love, peace, and caring) to get satisfaction in their life. People who prioritize this value have behaviors and attitudes that will disturb the capability of other people to live well (Kasser, 2018: 1). Thus, materialism is usually considered a negative value, attribute, or behavior (Donnelly, Ksendzova, Howell, & Vohs, 2016: 272). Regarding the novel, it has been considered an exciting topic to be studied in this research. The authors assumed that there is a materialism issue delineated by the adverse impacts in Burnett's *A Little Princess*.

The novel is a book version of a serial short story titled *Sara Crewe* or *What Happened in Miss Minchin's* (1887-1888) in *St. Nicholas Magazine*. It was originally published in September 1905 by Charles Scribner's Sons in New York and Warne in London (Rutherford, 2000: 20). It was written in the late Victorian era. Burnett recounted a woman figure, Miss Minchin—Sara Crew's headmistress—in *A Little Princess* with a materialistic idea. Sara's father—Captain Ralph Crew—was a wealthy Britain Army living and raising her in India. Unfortunately, the Indian climate was considered too harsh for British children throughout British colonialism, so he sent her daughter to Select Seminary School 'Miss Minchin', a boarding school in London for young children. Since Miss Minchin had heard that Sara Crew was a rich man's daughter and he asked her to give everything Sara wishes; she tent to treat Sara as a show pupil with greater privileges than other pupils. Unfortunately, after her father died and he left nothing for her, Miss Minchin was very shocked. She turned to be mean to her, even though she made Sara an errand girl to oblige her school without decent wages. However, after Sara met with Mr. Carrisford, her father's colleague, she got her legacy from her father's wealth. Miss Minchin persuaded her to return to the school as a show pupil again.

According to this synopsis, we know that Burnett depreciated the materialism idea, which is only obsessed with worldly possession rather than spiritual values. Therefore, the authors attempt to analyze: 1) How the materialism issue in the late Victorian era was portrayed in the novel? 2) What the negative impacts of materialism have on human

life, particularly the lives of children? By associating the novel with the background of the era when Burnett wrote the novel, this research attempts to scrutinize how the author constructed materialism in the novel and reveal the worldview on materialism. In doing so, it will operate the theory of Genetic Structuralism by Lucien Goldmann (1980).

Lucien Goldmann coined the Genetic Structuralism theory. It signifies the literary work as a structure that comprises several units that relate to each other to produce a specific meaning (Goldmann, 1980: 11). Further, he confirmed there is a relationship between art and society because the literary work can also be influenced by genetic factors such as an author and the historical background of the literary work (Goldmann, 1980: 11). However, the homology between the literary and social structures is not directly linked. It connects with the author social group's worldview constructed in his work as responses of his group to issues in their surroundings (Goldmann, 1980: 11 & 33). It signifies that the literary work can depict social reality in a specific time by involving the worldview (Goldmann, 1980: 29). Goldmann asserted that the genetic structuralism theory has four concepts as follows.

According to Goldmann (1980: 48), human fact consists of two parts. The first, individual fact results from personal activities such as dreams, impudent attitudes, and libidinal actions. This individual fact only focuses on an individual so that it does not impact the historical process in a particular society. The second, social fact that is expressed by a group associated with history. It signifies the social fact that relates to the history of a particular community to fulfil community requirements. It impacts the members of the community within economic, political, and social aspects. It is a reaction of the group to attain a balance in their environment. Humans try to achieve a better balance between themselves as subjects and the world around them, e.g., building a house, making a road, and writing a book (Goldmann, 1980: 40). Accordingly, a literary work belongs to a human fact product.

The author is part of a group in society, or Goldmann (1980: 26) said that the author is a trans-individual subject who is a unity or a collectivity. Besides, Goldmann (1980: 41) affirmed the human sciences present the human behavior subject, and the creators of a structure are not individual subject. Therefore, the human fact must be related to the

collective subject who communicate with each other and have an aspiration and ideas about issues faced by the community.

The author can be a trans-individual subject since he can convey the aspirations and ideas of his group in facing problems in his work. It means that the literary work written by the author belongs to a collective subject product. It represents group behavior in which he is also involved and ideas and aspirations of the collective subject in imaginatively facing such problems. Hence, the worldview becomes an aspect that intercedes society and literature.

Goldmann (1975: 159-160) asserted that a homology concept exists between certain groups' social structures and the literary work structure because both structures result from an equal structuration activity; it is not linked directly. The social structure is not in line with the literary work structure, but it is allied with the world view as a response of a group towards a social phenomenon in a society (Goldmann, 1980: 33). Along with this vein, he also explained that literary work is the expression of the author social group's worldview imaginary by creating a universe of characters, objects, and relations imaginary (Goldmann, 1980: 66). Hence, the significant structure is the representation of certain social realities in a particular time and place in the form of literary work by implicating the worldview (Goldmann, 1980: 24). It means the social phenomenon that happened within the society does not depict precisely but it is shown in imaginary form by involving the author's imagination and the worldview since the community is the real life of human fact whilst the literary work is a fictional story (Goldmann, 1980: 29). The representation of social reality in literary work is shown by the relation between characters and the objects around them.

Goldmann (1977: 17) defined worldview as ideas, aspirations, and feelings that associate each social group member and contrast with members of other social groups; it cannot appear suddenly. It results from the interaction between a specific social class and a specific situation at a particular time. It comes forth since there is a consciousness collectively towards certain social and economic conditions experienced by the social condition of the collective subject (Goldman, 1977: 18). Each member of the social group has equal power, spirit, and purpose in the society and develops the world view which then becomes a collective awareness

against their surrounding environment condition. It is also a historical product of the social group to solve some issues experienced by the social group to make a better societal balance.

Goldmann (1975: 59) asserted there is a homology concept between certain social groups' structure in society and the literary work structure; it is not linked directly. The social structure does not align with the literary work structure; it is allied with the worldview that raises and evolves in a society (Goldman, 1980: 33). In other words, it is associated with the worldview of the social group, which emerges as a response to social and economic conditions around them. The literary work is a trans-individual subject product that deputizes a social reality that happened at a particular place and time, and it also delineates the trans individual's worldview as a member of his social group. Consequently, the worldview function correlates with the social structure in literary work and the social structure in society. Further, it can be affirmed that Genetic Structuralism is a literary theory that splices society's structure into the literary structure through the worldview.

This study belongs to qualitative research. The primary data are dialogues and narratives related to materialism issues designated in the novel. Besides, the secondary data are facts and phenomena which support the primary data taken from journal articles, books, dictionaries, and published theses. This study applies Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism. There are two steps to analyze the data: 1) relating the materialism issue within the novel and the materialism issue in Victorian Britain to find homology between the novel structure and social structure in Victorian Britain, and 2) scrutinizing the depiction of materialism through the series of events in the novel and based on the fundamental concept of the world view of the theory to find the world view on materialism in the Victorian age in Britain.

Three previous studies contribute to conducting this research. First is Suranto's undergraduate thesis (2016) about Oscar Wilde's short stories entitled *Nightingale and the Rose* and *The Happy Prince* as the data source. He used Genetic Structuralism to explore his personal view of Wilde on materialism and found three results: 1) the binary opposition of the human character against non-human characters indicates a criticism of materialism, 2) the social structures when Wilde wrote the stories are the

late Victorian period society, and 3) the world view on materialism is resistance.

The second study is Wulandari's undergraduate thesis (2017) about *A Little Princess* (1905). This research applies Carl Jung's psychology personality and shows that the exploitation factors are migration, education, poverty/economics, and the exploited children experience a different development from the unexploited children.

The third study is an article written by Akkūlah Doğan (2018) by using Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) as the data source. This study focuses on how Wilde expressed his resistance to commercialism, capitalism, materialism, utilitarianism, naturalism, realism, and the literary movements he conveyed in the novel in the late Victorian era. The result demonstrates that the novel portrays aestheticism, which represents Wilde's resistance to phylactery and the inflexibility of Victorian society. He judged these moral decadences were cruel and oppressive for humans and art.

This study emphasizes how materialism was constructed in the novel and reveals the worldview on materialism by applying Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism. Theoretically, it is hoped to be an example of the genetic structuralism theory application in examining a literary work. Practically, it is anticipated to provide an alternative interpretation of the novel and make readers aware of the negative impacts of being materialistic, especially on children's lives. Additionally, it contributes to readers who want to know how the social-historical background when a novel was written can affect its creation.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Materialism in *A Little Princess* (Cultural Context of Victorian Age)

After the death of King William IV, Queen Victoria succeeded the British Empire's throne when she was eighteen. Her reign is known as the Victorian Age, lasting for 63 years (20th June 1837 until her death on 22nd January 1901). Britain's prosperity marked this era, Britain's glory internationally, and high national British self-confidence. During this age, many substantial changes in almost every aspect of society, politics, literature, education, and economy affected the British (Mitchell, 2009: 13). In social and

political aspects, the democratic system emerged after the Anglo-Saxon prolonged war could slaked. The British public could elect or select for themselves their representatives who would represent their concerns and interests in The House of Commons (Rathod, 2019: 2). In addition, in the literature aspect, prose, especially novels, used to be the most dominant genre rather than poetry and drama. Many great novelists appeared, such as Charles Dickens, the Bronte sisters, William Thackeray, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, Oscar Wilde, and Frances Hodgson Burnett (Rathod, 2019: 2). Furthermore, in the economic aspect, Britain reached a real climax of the Industrial Revolution (Rathod, 2019: 3-4).

Britain became the first country that shifts from a handicraft and agrarian economy to one dominated by machine manufacturing and industry (Mitchell, 2009: 13). As the handicraft process was revolutionized by manufacturing technology, the revolution brought advantageous and disadvantageous sides. On the beneficial side, it led to the invention of the steam engine to facilitate a broadly used power source, the productivity of goods soared, the first railway construction to expedite transportation or traveling, mass printing, the telegraph, and more. Along with this vein, society also made progress in production methods. Consequently, Britain could raise its national income and prosperity. On the other side, the Industrial Revolution resulted in poverty, low remuneration for workers, polluted cities, slums, child labor, social gap and class conflict between the capitalist class and proletariat class, crime, and materialism issues (Allen, 2017: 2-3; Haque et al., 2018: 1).

Based on the homology relationship between a particular social group's structure in society and the literary work structure in the genetic structuralism theory, the social phenomenon above can inspire the author of literary work to produce his works (Goldmann, 1975:159). It explains that the social issues caused by the flourishing of the Industrial Revolution in Britain during the Victorian era could affect Burnett to write *A Little Princess*, which she also wrote during the Victorian period. One of the social issues was the emergence of materialism in the Britain (Haque et al., 2018: 1). In this case, she wanted to disapprove of the issue by revealing some adverse impacts of materialism in the novel as the following.

The Division of Social Classes as the Human Facts

As the human fact product, Burnett desired to expose a social reality in the Victorian age. It was the division of social classes caused by materialism issues. The Victorian era had three social classes: upper, middle, and working class, with divisions within each (Steinbach, 2016:128). Each social class had characteristics that distinguished one class from the others. This class distinction was based on material possessions, such as income and wealth, that each class had (Steinbach, 2016: 125). Therefore, their material possession could characterize each class.

The Victorian Upper Class

It was the smallest, wealthiest, and most powerful among the other classes below (Steinbach, 2016:128). They gained income from the rental of their property, such as lands and investment profits. They could obtain incomes of at least £1,000 and over £1 million per annum. There were three subcategories within the upper class (Steinbach, 2016: 129).

First was the aristocracy, which included people from the royal family. Second was the middle-upper class which covered baronets, commoners who inherited the lowest title of nobility (Mitchell, 2009: 22-23). Third was the lower upper class. It involved untitled landed gentries and large-scale businesspeople (Steinbach, 2016: 90). In the novel, the manifestation of the lower upper class is represented by Sara, her father, and Mr. Carrisford.

“He owned a large tract of land upon which diamonds had been found, and he was engaged in developing the mines. If all went as was confidently expected, he would become possessed of such wealth as it made one dizzy to think of. Because he was fond of the friend of his school days, he had allowed him to share in this enormous fortune by becoming a partner in his scheme, and he is Mr Carrisford.”

(Burnett, 2017: 66)

Captain Crew—Sara’s father, is a British army and a landowner in India. Since he finds many diamonds on his land, he becomes a diamond mine owner, giving him abundant wealth. Before he died, he shared his incredible wealth with Mr. Carrisford, his school friend and partner. It signifies that Captain

Crew, Sara, and Mr. Carrisford belong to the lower upper class, who are untitled landed gentries or businessmen and obtain their wealth from their property.

The Victorian Middle Class

They worked but did not do physical labor like the working class. Their job required higher education, such as university education and proficiency. Their income could be from £100 to £1,000 per annum (Burnett, 2017: 66). Within the middle class, there were two subdivisions. First was the upper-middle class. They involved upper levels of governmental service, men in the higher status branches of medicine and law, university professors, architecture and civil engineering, and the school headmasters (Mitchell, 2009: 20). They socialized with the lower gentry, educated their children at boarding school and university as the upper class, and took pleasure in the same entertainments, such as opera and theatre (Steinbach, 2016: 136). The second was the lower-middle class. They comprised lower government workers, middle managers, and schoolteachers (Mitchell, 2009: 20).

Miss Minchin and the students depict the upper-middle class.

“It was a big, dull, brick house, exactly like all the others in its row, but that on the front door there shone a brass plate on which was engraved in black letters:

MISS MINCHIN, Select Seminary for Young Ladies.

Then he lifted her out of the cab, and they mounted the steps and rang the bell. Sara often thought afterwards that the house was exactly like Miss Minchin.”

(Burnett, 2017: 66)

Miss Minchin owns a boarding school in London City and becomes the headmaster. Her profession and school are essential to her living and to preserve her identity as the higher-middle class. Besides, students from age four to sixteen are also considered higher middle class as they also assort and are in the same school as Sara, who is of the lower upper class. They are Lavinia Herbert, Jessie, Lottie, Ermengarde, and others.

The Victorian Working Class (Men, Women, and Children)

It was the largest of the population during this age. They acquired income from wages under £100 per annum (Steinbach, 2016: 136). The working class was split into three categories: 1) men workers, their job consisted of artisanal craft jobs in small workshops, mines, large factories, and farming (Steinbach, 2016: 136); 2) the women workers, most labored as seamstresses and domestic servants in retail shops, textile mills, laundries, and other factories (Mitchell, 2009: 45-46); 3) the child workers, they were also hired in small underground dark coal mines and worked 12 hours daily, day and night, and in shifts. Later, in the late Victorian age, the owners could not hire children under twelve in any workshop or factory. However, the children could still be employed in retail trades, agriculture, and domestic service (Mitchell, 2009: 20).

In the novel, Ram Dass, a native Indian manservant—a Lascar—portrays the working-class man. He is a manservant owned by and serves Mr. Carrisford, and they live beside the school. After Sara's father dies and she becomes a scullery maid, he meets her for the first time in the school attic. Since the meeting, he stalks her quietly and realizes she is just a scullery maid of the school, not a student who lives poor and is tortured by Miss Minchin. Consequently, he feels pity for her and talks about her condition to his master (Burnett, 2017: 192-193). Aside from Ram Dass, there is also a child worker. Before Sara becomes the scullery maid, Miss Minchin hires Becky, the youngest school servant. She is described as a sad servant girl who is fourteen years old, so stunted, ugly, thin, timid, and has a smudgy face (Burnett, 2017: 52-57).

The division of social classes in the novel signifies the division of social classes in Victorian Britain society as the social reality. There are three social classes from which income or material possession could differentiate. Therefore, income or material possession could distinguish each class's character from other classes.

Social Gap between the Upper – Middle Class and Working Class Through Lifestyle

First, in the household guides aspect, the living standards could be seen by how many servants a

family could hire. The more income they attained, the more servants they could employ. Therefore, the upper class, whose income was at least £1,000 per annum, and the middle class, whose income was £100 to £1,000 a year, could employ servants. Examples are housemaids, cooks, and nurserymaids or a governess for their children and menservants. On the other hand, the working class, whose income was under £50 per annum, performed as servants (Mitchell, 2009: 32-38).

Sara lives in a beautiful house in India and has many servants who call her *Missee* Sahib and an *ayah*, who is a native maid or nursemaid hired by Europeans in India and honors her (Burnett, 2017: 9). Then after she becomes a student in London, her father employs a French maid to substitute for her *ayah* (Burnett, 2017: 14). Additionally, Mr. Carrisford's large family has many servants and nurses who take care of their little children (Burnett, 2017: 138). As an upper-middle-class woman, Miss Minchin can afford to have a cook, housemaid, and child worker even if they are not a servant of the best class (Burnett, 2017: 109). On the contrary, Becky, as a working-class child, performs full-time physical jobs in bad physical condition (Burnett, 2017: 57).

Second, material substances depended on their income and social class (Mitchell, 2009: 111). The upper and middle class had enough even more disposable income for buying horses and carriages as private transportation, shopping for clothing, and popular house ornamentation such as luxury household decorations and furniture (Mitchell, 2009: 131). Whereas the working class had little disposable income, they did not have the funds to buy luxurious things (Steinbach, 2016: 111-112).

Mr. Crew gives Sara a pony and a carriage of her own. Likewise, he expects she can learn to ride the pony in the row, go out, and buy a new doll (Burnett, 2017: 14). In addition, Mr. Carrisford's large family also owns their brougham, which is used to take a trip and to go to a children's party (Burnett, 2017: 138-151). Besides, they can afford many luxury things such as luxury dresses, tiger rugs, a soft and low sofa and chair, pictures, and other kinds of stuff from India. On the other hand, Becky does not have the funds to buy such stuff.

Third, education in Victorian England depended on their sex, values, religion, social class, and parents' financial circumstances. One of the Victorian schools

was a boarding school for girls, like a private day school only for girls. The upper and middle-class parents sent their children to be educated at an early age, even infants of three. They also paid an extra fee for their children to become parlor borders or special students with more private facilities than other students. Conversely, the working-class children acquired little school education and began their labor very young to assist the family's income (Mitchell, 2009: 169-187).

Sara is known as a show pupil in her boarding school. She enjoys more private facilities at the school, e.g., a pretty bedroom of her own as well as room furniture, a carriage, and a maid (Burnett, 2017: 14). Besides that, Miss Minchin, as the headmistress, offers more praise for her instead of other students. It is because Sara is an exceptional student at the school (Burnett, 2017: 29). Thereunto, there is a child of four age whose name Lottie Leigh as one of the students in the school. The students acquire many school lessons. Conversely, Becky, as a working-class child, cannot study and get a better education in school but does her physical labor at a young age to serve the school.

The statements above indicate that social classes with more disposable income could afford a higher standard of living (Steinbach, 2016: 95). It signifies that upper and middle-class families could get a better life on their income than the lower-class family. They could pay for servant(s), live in a better house with many excellent and luxurious kinds of stuff, have expensive private transportation, and get a better education. Otherwise, the lower class needed more income to support their lives. Subsequently, they became servants, lived in slums with dirty and unhealthy environments, did not have the funds for good kinds of stuff and private transportation, and could not get a better education.

Child Labor as the Significant Structure

Child labor during the Victorian era becomes the significant structure of the novel. International Labor Organization (2022) defined child labor as physically, mentally, morally, or socially harmful and dangerous employment to children. It obstructs their education by commanding them to abandon school early and denying them the chance to be present in school. They forced to become the child labor or serfdom because of debt bondage. They are also used child in armed conflict, child trafficking, and child prostitution that

give damage the morale, safety, and/or health of children.

There were several reasons for child labor in terms of the employers and the working class. First, in terms of employers, they regarded that children aged six or seven had nimble bodies and tiny hands that were easily maneuverable. Second, the child workers would not revolt; they were powerless. Third, they could be forced to work and paid lower wages. Moreover, the working class could not afford their children's education and considered that education was not required for them. Therefore, their parents ordered their children to work to ensure their life (Hakim, 2016:11-13; Isnaeni, 2016: 15).

The illustration of child labor during the Victorian era is also illustrated in the novel. It can be seen in the exploitation of children as domestic servants.

“She was a forlorn little thing who had just taken the place of scullery maid— though, as to being scullery maid, she was everything else besides. She blacked boots and grates and carried heavy coal- scuttles up and down stairs, and scrubbed floors and cleaned windows, and was ordered about by everybody every minute of the day. She was fourteen years old but was so stunted in growth that she looked about twelve. Her name was Becky.”

(Burnett, 2017: 57)

Through the quotation above, Burnett successfully exhibited child labor, which was one of England's major problems of the Industrial Revolution. Becky and Sara become the school servants who perform many tasks both within and outside the school in all weathers without proper education, wages, food, clothes, and clean bedrooms. Miss Minchin and the adult servants berate them, often suffer from hungry, exhaustion, and cold, grow skinny, and are exiled from the students. Miss Minchin is less sympathetic as a middle-class woman as they are orphans, penniless, and powerless (Burnett, 2017: 57-228).

Materialistic Traits

Belk (1985: 265) asserted that materialism is a human tendency that assigns worldly possessions to a central life of humans to get the most excellent satisfaction. As the owner class, the upper and middle class were inclined to gain more money or wealth through their

business, for they presumed and wanted only worldly possessions to achieve the most excellent satisfaction in their life and to sign one's prosperity in society. Moreover, because of this materialistic idea, they became morally degraded. They often valued other people with the thread of money, wealth, social or familial status, and property instead of moral or social values. Therefore, the lower class became victims of the materialistic cruelties (Haque et al., 2018: 1-6). Further, according to Belk (1985: 267), the materialism value has three materialistic traits as follows.

Possessiveness

Possessiveness is someone's tendency to maintain control or retain other people's ownership, such as money, a house, a car, a person, or even ideas. In other words, it points out that a materialistic person has an attitude to participate or has a desire to possess other people's possessions. It is because the owner is deliberated as essential or necessary for their life (Belk, 1985: 267). In the novel, this trait is displayed by Miss Minchin's desire and attitude toward Sara's wealth and possessions.

"The Last Doll, indeed!" said Miss Minchin. "And she is mine, not yours. Everything you own is mine. Don't put on grand airs," she said. "The time for that sort of thing is past. You are not a princess any longer. Your carriage and your pony will be sent away— your maid will be dismissed. You will wear your oldest and plainest clothes— your extravagant ones are no longer suited to your station. You are like Becky— you must work for your living."

(Burnett, 2017: 101)

Before Sara and her father arrive at the school, Miss Minchin knows about the abundant wealth possessed by Mr. Crew, Sara's father. In addition, she hears that he is willing to pay more for the school tuition e.g., he will rent the private rooms for Sara and her maid, and a shed for her pony and carriage. Consequently, Miss Minchin can gain more benefits or money, which is deliberated essential by her as a materialistic woman. For this reason, she feels fortunate to possess a rich student in her school. Besides, she always praises Sara in front of everyone. Miss Minchin does all these so Sara will be fond of her and the school. However, after Mr. Crew dies, Sara is

left penniless. Miss Minchin confiscates all of Sara's luxury kinds of stuff except her oldest and plainest clothes and doll, dismisses her French maid, and sends away her pony and carriage. Although the luxury kinds of property do not belong to Miss Minchin, she takes them all.

Envy

Envy is characterization that people do not like other people's happiness, success, reputation, or any desired ownership (Belk, 1985: 268). It refers to the materialistic feeling of being jealous and resenting or disliking other people's excess. The materialistic feels underestimated by this ownership fact. In addition, materialism also expresses hypocrisy towards the other people who own such excess. Materialism performs a good attitude toward other people, but they, in fact, constantly mock the people behind them. In the novel, this envy trait appears in Miss Minchin's and Lavinia's envy of the prosperity of Sara. Miss Minchin expresses her hypocrisy in front of Sara, Mr. Crew, and the other students' parents.

"Privately, Miss Minchin disliked her, but she was far too worldly a woman to do or say anything which might make such a desirable pupil wish to leave her school. She knew quite well that if Sara wrote to her papa to tell him she was uncomfortable or unhappy, Captain Crewe would remove her at once. Miss Minchin's opinion was that if a child were continually praised and never forbidden to do what she liked, she would be sure to be fond of the place where she was so treated."

(Burnett, 2017: 40)

Miss Minchin, at first, always praises and spoils Sara when Sara is still the wealthiest student. She adores Sara's beauty, cleverness, and intelligence in all the school subjects and never prohibits her from doing what Sara wants, so Sara feels comfortable and fond of the school. Despite Miss Minchin's compliment, she envies and dislikes Sara privately because of Sara's wealth and prosperity. In doing so, she and Miss Amelia, her daughter, mock her without Sara knowing. Along with this, Lavinia, one of Sara's friends, also expresses her spitefulness toward Sara. She knows Sara is the wealthiest student and has more luxury stuff than her. Also, Miss Minchin always spoils Sara. Lavinia feels envious and underestimated by this fact,

so she constantly bullies her in front of her and the other students.

Fundamentally, this second trait exhibited by Miss Minchin and Lavinia is motivated by their discontentment towards Sara's wealth and prosperity, which are in the form of material possessions. They do not have such wealth and prosperity as they are middle class and have lower status than Sara. They also want to own the wealth and prosperity that will gain their status and pleasure them.

Non-Generosity

Non-generosity or stinginess is someone's reluctance to give or share the wealth with others. It involves an unwilling behavior to lend or donate possessions to other people. The non-generosity people tend to take more benefits but find it hard to grant their custody. The attitude emerges because of the selfish interest of someone over others (Belk, 1985: 268). It indicates that materialistic persons tend not to do charity with their wealth, such as money and goods to other people. They want to obtain wealth as much as possible and always maintain it to pleasure them. The stinginess of Miss Minchin presents this trait towards Sara and Becky as the servants of the school.

"Of course, several long and tiresome errands must be done. Sara was repeatedly sent out until her shabby clothes were damp. The absurd old feathers on her forlorn hat were more draggled and absurd than ever, and her downtrodden shoes were so wet that they could not hold any more water. Added to this, she had been deprived of her dinner because Miss Minchin had chosen to punish her. She was so cold and hungry and tired that her face began to have a pinched look."

(Burnett, 2017: 66)

Since Sara becomes an orphan and penniless, Miss Minchin always asks her to do long, tiresome errands inside and outside the school. Nonetheless, she must provide fair wages, food, clothes, shoes, or a bedroom. She does not care about her suffering condition even though Sara is an orphan. Her clothes are no longer fit, and she is always cold when she sleeps. Moreover, when Sara makes a little mistake, Miss Minchin punishes her by scolding and depriving her of supper after all the errands. Becky also experiences this miserable condition. For that reason,

they live like the poor servants in the school.

Through the child labor narration, Burnett designated the motives of Miss Minchin for having this trait. The motives are to get benefit from the weak child workers and maintain their wealth or possession. Miss Minchin's stinginess shows the human desire to achieve more benefits through material possession for their pleasure. Her desire for material possessions makes her rapacious (Helmi, 2017: 59).

It can be concluded that Miss Minchin has three materialistic traits coined by Belk. First is possessiveness. It is shown by her desire and attitude to retain all of Sara's luxury stuff, although they do not belong to Miss Minchin. The second is envy. It appears in her envy of Sara's wealth and prosperity. Because of her envy, she privately disfavors her. The third is non-generosity. Her stinginess toward Sara and Becky as the school servants are displayed. She finds it hard to donate her possessions or do charity to them. Burnett illustrated Miss Minchin as the materialistic woman character in the novel through these materialistic traits.

The World View on Materialism in *A Little Princess*

Goldmann (1977: 17) defined *worldview* as ideas, aspirations, and feelings that associate each social group member and contrast with members of other social groups through the author's work. Besides, literary work is a product of human fact with structure and meaning (Goldmann, 1980: 11 & 80). Understanding the meaning of the literary structure means finding the reasons or factors that cause the literary work's structure. Therefore, to find the reasons for factors, someone cannot only be based on the literary work, but he should find some information outside the literary work. The information can be obtained by understanding the background of the literary creation, such as the environmental situation when the literary work was written and the biography of the author. Further, the author, as a member of the collective subjects, can express a world view that emerges as a reaction of his group towards problems (Goldmann, 1977: 18). Consequently, by comprehending the worldview, one can find the meaning of the structure of the literary work.

According to the statement above, the biography of the author and the environmental situation when

the literary work was produced play an essential role in revealing the worldview of the author's social group. Burnett was born on 24th November 1849 at Cheetham Hill, Manchester, England, and died on 29th October 1924. She is a daughter of a prosperous businessman in London, so her family lives comfortably. Nevertheless, her father's company was bankrupt because of the Civil War, and he died because of a stroke when she was three years old; leaving the family without income. Consequently, her mother had to obtain income for the family, and her grandmother looked after Burnett. Later, Burnett began her writing career at nineteenth years old to earn income to support her family. She produced many plays and novels and became a successful children's book writer, especially for her significant achievements; *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1886), *A Little Princess* (1905), and *The Secret Garden* (1911) (Rutherford, 2000: 6).

The pattern of the rags-to-riches within this story was inspired by her own family experience (Rutherford, 2000: 9). Besides that, social issues or phenomena during the Victorian age in Britain influenced her to make the novel. In this case, one of the social issues was the emergence of materialism. In addition, she put her sympathy for the miserable life of the poor urban children in Britain at that time (Rutherford, 2000: 27). Hence, through the novel, she hoped readers would be aware that the materialism issue also had terrible impacts on the children.

As a member of the collective subjects, Burnett became a representative to express the world view of this group as a response to the materialism issue. In doing so, she confronted Miss Minchin as a materialistic character against Sara Crew as a non-materialistic character. Through characterization, Burnett criticized the materialistic society at that time by using Miss Minchin's agentive position. She depicted Miss Minchin as wealth-oriented over moral well-being. Miss Minchin believes wealth can give her more pleasure (Kutzer, 2000: 50). Hence, Miss Minchin always wants to obtain more money and looks at other people based on their social class status and wealth. She admires rich people and humiliates poor people. None of her characterizations describes love, care, warmth, and essential qualities of motherhood (Kutzer, 2000: 50). As the non-materialistic character, on the other hand, Sara is agentive as the member of the lower-upper class who is kind-hearted, clever, and

care for others. Even though she is more prosperous than Miss Minchin, she reckons about human equality and does not look at other people based on their social class status and wealth. She is generous and helps others, including a servant, and a street beggar who need helps (Kutzer, 2000: 52).

Hereafter, materialism leads to adverse effects. One of them causes someone to be careless and helpless toward others (Kasser, 2018: 6). Therefore, to attain balance in society, Burnett showed readers this effect by reflecting it in the novel. The bad impact can be seen through child labor as the significant structure of the novel, e.g., Miss Minchin's bad trait to Becky as the poor child worker in the school. Her mistreatment is also done to Sara when she loses her legacy from the diamond mines and is left penniless by her father. Although they are only children and need love, affection, and help, Miss Minchin acts careless. She hires them as school servants who do not acquire appropriate wages and living, since she is greedy for material wealth. Then, we can see that materialism can alter people's perspective of love based on material wealth such as money, properties, jewelry, or other valuable material possessions. Moreover, it also makes the materialistic immoral and careless to the poor.

Furthermore, Kasser (2018: 505) stated that materialism could predispose someone to be profit-oriented. It points out that materialism induces poverty in the working class and the social gap between the capitalist and working class; making Victorian society as a social problem. Then, the upper and middle class insists that the working-class work hard to gain more profit, but the upper and middle class disregards the worker's prosperity. For instance, Miss Minchin demands that Becky and Sara do many errands, but she does not give them decent food, clothes, shoes, or bedrooms and often scolds them. She thinks they are powerless child workers and cannot protest her, which is Miss Minchin's authoritative position.

The story's ending conveys the critique of materialism during the Victorian era. It tells that Sara can inherit her legacy of the diamond mines and becomes a wealthy young girl again after she meets Ram Dass and Mr. Carrisford. Miss Minchin is surprised and expects Sara to return to the school by persuading her to become the student again. However, Sara does not want to come back to school; she invites Becky to leave the school with her, and it makes Miss

Minchin envy. Meanwhile, Miss Amelia is disappointed by Miss Minchin's materialistic traits that lead her to be hard-hearted and mean to Sara. She worries that Sara will tell the other student's parents about Miss Minchin's bad characteristics and treatment, which will cause them to transfer the students to other schools. Miss Minchin regrets that she has tortured Sara and lost the most prosperous student (Burnett, 2017: 271-275). Burnett also provided social problem-solving through the Sara character. She, as the non-materialistic character, does not consider other people based on wealth or material value. She is also always helpful and respects others, so she is favored many people and lives happily (Kutzer, 2000: 55). Thus, it directs materialistic traits cause someone to be greedy for worldly possession; even other people will disfavor them. Meanwhile, non-materialistic traits render someone not to be mean for worldly living, and others will favor them.

Through the story above, it can be concluded that Burnett, as the writer of the novel and the representative of her collective group, revealed the world view of her group towards the materialism issue on British society in the Victorian era. The worldview declined the idea of the materialism of the age by delineating the adverse impacts of this issue e.g., the division of social class, the social gap between the capitalist and the worker, and child labor. Besides, it also expresses the humanist side of non-materialistic such as loving and caring for others without considering social class. Finally, *A Little Princess*, as a human fact product, can be interpreted as a view to getting a better life for poor child workers at that time.

CONCLUSION

Utilizing the Genetic Structuralism theory by Lucien Goldmann, this research comes to two conclusions. First, *A Little Princess* was created by Burnett in the Victorian Age when Britain reached the Industrial Revolution climax. The revolution made much development in many aspects and emerged the materialism issue in society. Additionally, this issue brought some adverse impacts or social issues, such as the division of social classes, the social gap between the upper-middle and working class, and even child labor at that time. These social issues inspired Burnett to produce the novel. She illustrated these issues as

human facts and the significant structure of the novel.

Second, Burnett, as the trans individual subject of her group, conveyed a world view of her group towards the materialism issue. The worldview reveals a resistance to this issue by giving a picture of the social issues above and the binary opposition between the materialistic character depicted by Miss Minchin and the non-materialistic character played by Sara. Through the binary opposition, she wanted readers to be aware of the negative impacts of applying materialistic traits, especially for materialism. For examples are possessiveness, envy, non-generosity, and greed for worldly possession. People disfavor them as it has been narrated in the end of the story that Sara and Mr. Carrisford leave Miss Minchin which makes her loses her wealthiest student.

STATEMENT OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that this article is free from any conflict of interest regarding the general data collection, analysis, editorial, and publication process.

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