



**SOCIAL INEQUALITY REFLECTED IN
TRACY CHEVALIER'S *GIRL WITH A PEARL
EARRING***

Status Conflict Caused by Broken Stereotype and Expected Role

A THESIS

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Sarjana Degree Majoring Literature in the English Department
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Submitted by:

INDAH ZUMROTUN

NIM: 13020112140046

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY
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PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer honestly confirms that this thesis is compiled by herself without taking any result from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3 as well as the diploma degree from any university. The writer also asserts that all of the materials in this thesis are not quoted from other publications or someone's paper except from the references that have been mentioned.

Semarang, July 2016

Indah Zumrotun

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

A veil hangs between the two opposites, a mere slip of a thing that is too transparent to warn us or comfort us. You hate now, but look through this veil and see the possibility of love; you're sad, but look through to the other side and see happiness. Absolute composure shifting to a complete mess—it happens so quickly, all in the blink of an eye

-Thanks for the Memories, Cecilia Ahern-

Yang terpenting adalah selalu sopan dan berpegang teguh pada agama.

-My Mother-

Yang penting bahagia. Uang bisa dicari, tapi bahagia susah dicarinya.

-My Father-

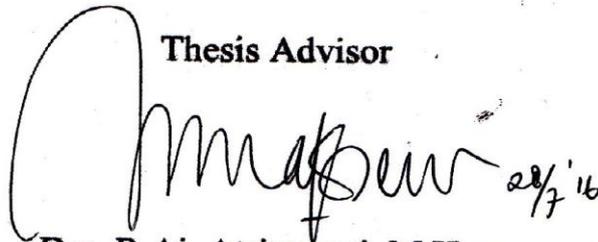
This thesis is dedicated to me, my beloved father and mother.

That's all.

APPROVAL

Approved by

Thesis Advisor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R.Aj. Atrinawati', with a date '28/7'16' written to the right of the signature.

Dra. R.Aj. Atrinawati, M.Hum

NIP. 196101011990012001

VALIDATION

Approved by

Strata 1 Thesis Examination Committee

Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University

On August 26, 2016

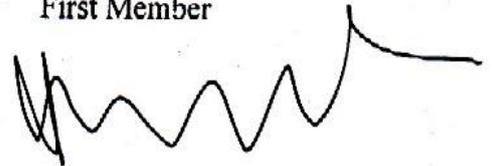
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Eta Farmacelia N., S.S., M.Hum., M.A

NIP 197205292003122001

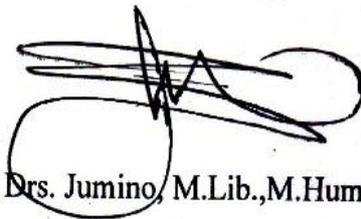
First Member



Hadiyanto, S.S., M.Hum

NIP 197407252008011013

Second Member



Drs. Jumino, M.Lib., M.Hum

NIP 196207031990011001

Third Member



Dra. Cut AP Elksafny, M.Ed

NIP 195510031978122001

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Semarang, 26 Agustus 2016

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ABSTRAK

“Girl with a Pearl Earring” adalah novel karya Tracy Chevalier yang mengangkat kisah tentang seorang pembantu rumah tangga yang melawan majikannya untuk mempertahankan kebenaran dan kehormatannya. Hal yang menjadi fokus utama pengkajian novel ini adalah identifikasi stereotype dan peran sosial pekerja kelas bawah (dalam hal ini pembantu) dan simbol perbedaan status yang dilawan oleh tokoh utama dalam novel sehingga menimbulkan konflik antara pembantu dan majikan. Untuk menganalisis pokok masalah tersebut penulis menggunakan metode kontekstual dengan pendekatan sosiologi berdasarkan teori Stereotype, Simbol dan Status. Teori Status yang akan diterapkan dalam proses pengkajian novel adalah teori Max Weber. Tujuan dari pemilihan topik ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi perbedaan status antara kelas atas dan kelas bawah serta konflik status yang dapat ditimbulkan. Dari hasil analisis pengkajian konflik status tersebut dapat disimpulkan bahwa tatanan stereotype suatu kelas sosial yang berlaku dalam masyarakat berhubungan dengan perbedaan status dari anggota kelas sosial tersebut. Hubungan sosial ini tidak selalu dapat berjalan dengan baik karena akan ada saatnya terjadi konflik ketika salah satu kelas sosial melakukan penyimpangan stereotype dan peran sosial yang menjadi pembeda status seseorang dengan yang lain.

Kata Kunci: stereotype, konflik status, status symbol, pembantu rumah tangga, majikan

ABSTRACT

Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier tells a story about a maid who is against her mistress to defend the truth in order to save her pride and honor. The main focus of this thesis is identifying the stereotype, social role of lower-class (maid) and the status symbol differences which are broken by the maid character in the novel, so that the status conflict arises. In analyzing the issue of the novel as the topic of this thesis, the writer will use contextual method with sociological approach based on the theories of Stereotype, Symbol and Status. The theory of Status used in this thesis is the theory of Max Weber. The purpose of using this topic is to know the identification of status differences between upper-class and lower-class as well as the status conflict which is arisen. By analyzing the topic, it can be concluded that the stereotypes of a class social that applies in society relates to status differences between the members of a class social. That social relationship is not always able to run well because there will be a time for status conflict occurs when one social class breaks the role and stereotypes which become the status boundaries between one to the others.

Keywords: stereotype, status conflict, symbol, maid, mistress

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Literature is not only about something printed, but literature is a fiction as a form of imagination that can explore such an expression and emotion to amuse the reader (Wellek and Warren, 1949). There are many kinds of literary works such as drama, prose and poetry. Those kinds of literary works can be a representative of what happens in real life, just as written as stated by Wellek and Warren,

Like every human being, each work of literature has its individual characteristics; but it also shares common properties with other works of art, just as every man shares traits with humanity, with all members of his sex, nation, class, profession, etc (1949: 7).

As the object of the study, the writer will use prose to explore how a literary work can reflect the society through its story. Different from other literary works, according to Holman, “prose is most often meant to designate a conscious, a listing of ideas, a catalogue of object” (1960:382).

One problem in our society which is usually brought up in a literary work is the problem of social interaction related to the social inequality or social stratification. People in the world used to agglomerate themselves into several groups based on several categories. This agglomeration then creates kind of gap or class between one to the others as the form of social discrepancy.

In social life, the term ‘class’ is used to rank social categories within a system of economic stratification (Wright, 2003). Based on the social rank or class,

people usually treat the others differently regarding their financial situation, status, education, religion, and even race (Taniesha Woods et al, 2005). This situation creates kind of stereotypes to judge people and discriminate a man to the others.

Stereotyping seems to be the nature of human. It associates and attributes specific characteristic to a certain group (Dovidio et al, 2010). Among the stereotypes, the stereotypes for the people in a lower rank is likely to be more negative than towards them in the higher rank. People in highest rank used to make a negative judgement to other people, for instance, a master of a household may judge their servant to be a person who is dirty, lack in education, and lack in manner (Andersen, 2005).

The 'class' does not only differentiate the stereotypes of a group but also clearly categorizes its social role. This social condition is likely to be a common situation and if a person does not act, like they are believed to be, it will create such a conflict. Class may be formed based on economic stratification, but the conflict which can be arisen is not only about economic problem. Furthermore, in Max Weber theory this term of 'class' can lead to another problem of social stratification that is, the conflict of 'status'. According to Max Weber, social stratification can be distinguished into several hierarchies and one of them is the hierarchies of status (Weber, 1978). That issue is represented in the novel *Girl with A Pearl Earring* written by Tracy Chevalier.

The story of the novel *Girl with A Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier tells about a girl from a lower class who experiences status conflict with her mistress

because she is different from the stereotypes of her role as the lower class. This story contains the problem of social stratification, stereotypes and social role which lead to status conflict between a maid and a mistress. However, based on the consideration of the problems reflected in the story, as the analysis of the extrinsic elements of the novel, this thesis will use sociological approach of stereotype, status symbol and Max Weber's theory of Social Inequality related to the issue of status conflict. Besides, the writer will also analyze the intrinsic elements of the novel which is used to support the explanation of the extrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements will focus on character and conflict.

1.2. Research Problems

In this thesis, the discussion will be focused on the following problems:

- a. What are the stereotypes and social role of maid in the novel *Girl with A Pearl Earring*?
- b. What are the causes of the status conflict between Griet and her mistress in the novel *Girl with A Pearl Earring*?
- c. What are the impacts of the status conflict for Griet as the main character in the novel *Girl with A Pearl Earring*?

1.3. Objectives of the Research

Based on the research problems, this study has some purposes as below:

- a. To identify and analyze the stereotypes and social role of maid in the novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.
- b. To analyze the stereotypes and social role as the causes of the status conflict between Griet and her mistress in the novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

- c. To identify and analyze the impacts of the status conflict between Griet and her mistress in the novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

1.4. Methods of the Research

In writing this thesis, the writer uses two methods:

- a. Research Method

The writer uses library research as the research method of this thesis. George defines library research as “an investigation involving accepted facts, unknowns, speculation, logical procedures rigorously applied, verification, evaluation, repetition, and ultimately an interpretation of findings that extends understanding” (George, 22-23:2008). The writer uses library research for collecting all data, information, theories, and other references which are needed in completing this thesis.

- b. Method of Approach

In analysing the status conflict between the maid and her mistress characters in the novel, the writer will use contextual method by using sociological approach. According to Behrendt, contextual method “means situating the text within the milieu of its times and assessing the roles of author, readers (intended and actual), and commentators (critics, both professional and otherwise) in the reception of the text” (Behrendt, 2008).

The use of sociological approach will be started with the issue of stereotyping and status symbol as the causes of the status conflict reflected in the object of this thesis. Meanwhile, the discussion of status conflict will use Max Weber’s Social Inequality theory.

1.5. Organization of Thesis

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the explanation of the background, research problems, objectives, research method and approach method of the study.

CHAPTER II: BIOGRAPHY OF TRACY CHEVALIER AND SYNOPSIS OF *GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING*

The chapter contains a brief summary of the novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring* and also biography of its author, Tracy Chevalier.

CHAPTER III: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter of literary review is the part for the writer to give a deep explanation about all of the theories which are used in analyzing the novel. The theories included the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. The intrinsic elements consist of characters and conflict; whereas, the extrinsic elements are using the theory of stereotypes, status symbol and Social Inequality of Max Weber regarding the status conflict.

**CHAPTER IV: SOCIAL INEQUALITY REFLECTED IN TRACY
CHEVALIER'S *GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING*: STATUS
CONFLICT CAUSED BY BROKEN STEREOTYPE AND
EXPECTED ROLE**

This chapter is the part for the complete analysis of the theory's application on the novel *Girl with A Pearl Earring*. The discussion contains the explanation of how *Girl with A Pearl Earring* illustrates the issue of status conflict which is caused by the broken stereotypes and expected role.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

The chapter contains a review of the analysis discussion from the previous chapter and the result of the analysis. Besides, there will also be a review about the correlation between the study's purposes and the result of the study.

CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHY OF TRACY CHEVALIER AND SYNOPSIS OF *GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING*

2.1. The Author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*

The novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is written by Tracy Chevalier who, according to her official website, is an American novelist with dual citizenship. Chevalier was born on October 19, 1962 in Washington DC but she is living in London now. She has BA in English from Oberlin College, Ohio and MA in Creative Writing from University of East Anglia, Norwich, England. During her life, she has written eight novels, such as *The Virgin Blue* (1997), *Falling Angels* (2001), *The Lady and The Unicorn* (2003), *Burning Bright* (2007), *Remarkable Creatures* (2009), *The Last Runaway* (2013), and *At the Edge of the Orchard* (2016). However, *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is her second novel published in 1999. In addition, she has been involved in editing two short story collections and one of them entitled *Reader, I Married Him* (2016), a book of 21 short stories inspired by *Jane Eyre*.

Tracy likes to study art history and read books mostly written by women. That interests of her about history and woman is represented by her works which are more concerned in historical fiction and woman struggle. All of her novels take the historical setting of 17th to 19th centuries of Europe and they are also dominated by the story of woman struggle. She is interested in the issue of women in the past

who, according to her, are “invariably going to be circumscribed by circumstance” while she believes that men and women are and have to be equal.

However, *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is one of the successful novels of Tracy Chevalier which has been sold 5 million copies worldwide and was made into a film.

Taken from: <http://www.tchevalier.com/>

2.2. Synopsis of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*

Girl with a Pearl Earring is a story about 16 years old girl named Griet who suddenly become a maid after her father loss in trade because of blindness. Griet worked as a maid in a family of a painting-artist, Johannes Vermeer. There, besides doing household works, Griet got a special order to take care of Johannes Vermeer’s painting studio. There were only three members of the house who were allowed to enter the studio, those were Johannes Vermeer, Griet, and his mother in law named Maria Thins. Even, Mr. Vermeer’s wife, Catharina, was not allowed to enter the studio. By the time Griet worked to assist in the studio, Mr. Vermeer could see that Griet had a passion and ability in painting. As the result, Mr. Vermeer trusted Griet even more to take care of his painting needs.

In this case, Griet might in lower class than Catharina based on economic situation, but Griet was in a higher status than Catharina regarding the authority to enter the important painting studio of Mr. Vermeer. Regarding this situation,

Catharina found herself being envy with Griet, the new maid who had an authority to enter and take care of Mr. Vermeer's very important painting studio.

Catharina made Griet experiencing difficulties in the family and even Griet was slandered twice. Firstly, Griet was slandered for stealing Catharina's comb. It happened because Griet had a beautiful comb which looked too luxurious for such a maid. However, the truth was that the comb really belonged to Griet (she got it from her grandmother). In this case, Griet got some helps from Mr. Vermeer to prove that she was innocent.

Secondly, Griet was slandered for stealing Catharina's pearl earring and using it to seduce Mr. Vermeer. This incident happened when there was a powerful man who also had an authority on Vermeer's family, named Van Ruijven. He was attracted to Griet and Van Ruijven asked Johannes Vermeer to paint Griet. When he was painting Griet, Johannes Vermeer asked Griet to wear a pearl earring which actually belonged to Catharina. Griet tried to refuse it but she did not have any power. Then, Catharina's daughter who always kept her eye on Griet knew the situation and reported it to her mother Catharina. Catharina was very angry and she accused Griet for stealing her pearl earring and seducing her husband. It was a stereotype that a maid was not suitable for wearing jewels and a maid used to make affair with her master.

Griet waited for her master to support her and explain the truth (that the slander was not true) but her master did nothing and just being quite. As the result, Griet decided to run away from that house in order to protect her honor.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Intrinsic Elements

Analyzing the intrinsic elements of a literary works is kind of an important basic point since the intrinsic elements are the development contents of a works. The nature of intrinsic elements are written in *Theory of Literature* by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren that “the natural and sensible starting point for work in literary scholarship is the interpretation and analysis of the works of literature themselves. After all, only the works themselves justify all our interest in the life of an author” (1949: 139). According to *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* (2004) by Alfred L. Guerin, intrinsic elements of a prose consists of theme, character, setting, plot, structure, style and atmosphere. However, this study will only focus on the analysis of character and conflict.

3.1.1. Character and Characterization

It has been mentioned before that intrinsic elements are those contents within literary works which develop the story of literary works. One of the development contents of a story is character. In every story, there are some characters which are created by the author as the part of the story to make the story alive. Kennedy and Gioia define character as “presumably imagined person who inhabits story” (1983: 45).

Besides, according to Holman, character is “a brief descriptive sketch of personage who typifies some definite quality” (1960:74). Holman adds that “in

fiction the author reveals the character of imaginary persons. The creation of these imaginary persons so that they exist for the reader as real within the limits of the fiction is called characterization” (1960: 75). Characterization can be applied in a story by using three fundamental methods. Those fundamental methods are, first, explicit presentation, it is applied by direct narration of the author; second, presentation of the character through the character’s action; third representation from within a character, it is usually applied through the dialogue (1960:75).

3.1.2 Conflict

Every literary works may have plot. E.M. Froster explains that plot is “narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality” (Froster, 1927: 61). In addition to E.M Froster, C. Hugh Holman adds that “since plot consists of characters performing action in incident that interrelate to comprise a “single, whole, and complete” action, this interrelationship involves conflict” (Holman, 1960: 336).

Conflict is the soul of a story. Holman defines conflict as “the struggle which grows out of the interplay of the two opposing forces in a plot” (1960:105). Conflict may happens in four different kinds, those are (1) conflict or struggle against the forces of nature, (2) struggle against another person, (3) struggle against society, and (4) conflict between a person and himself (Holman, 1960). The conflict of a person against the forces of nature, a person against society and a person against another person are kind of external conflict. While, the conflict between a person and himself is called internal conflict.

3.2. Social Inequality

Literary works cannot only be analyzed by using intrinsic elements but it can be also analyzed using extrinsic elements. According to Wellek and Warren, extrinsic elements of literature “attempt to interpret literature in the light of its social context and its antecedents (1949: 65)”. Wellek and Warren adds that there are five extrinsic approaches that can be used in literature. Those approaches are biographical approach, psychological approach, sociological approach, literature and ideas, and literature and the others arts.

3.2.1. Social Stratification

The sociological approach in this thesis will appoint the issue of social inequality. It is usually related to the rank of people which is represented by the term of ‘class’. Social inequality represented in *Girl with a Pearl Earring* will be analyzed using the theory of a German sociologist, Max Weber. Max Weber has a consideration that class can be related not only to economy but also status as well as status honor.

In contrast to the purely economically determined "class situation," we wish to designate as *status situation* every typical component of the life of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of *honor*. This honor may be -connected with any quality shared by a plurality, and, of course, it can be knit to a class situation: class distinctions are linked in the most varied ways with status distinctions. Property as such is not, always recognized as a status qualification, but in the long run it is, and with extraordinary regularity...But status honor need not necessarily be linked with a class situation. (Weber, 1978: 932)

Carl Marx, with his famous Marxism theory, may refers ‘class’ to rank people based on their property or economic situation and concerns the inequality in a form of class exploitation as explained in an essay of Erick Olin Wright entitled *Social Class* (2003), that, “class analysis in the Marxist tradition is anchored in the

fifth question concerning the challenge to systems of economic oppression and exploitation” (Wright, 2003: 4). Meanwhile, Wright explained that according to Max Weber theory in *Economy and Society* (1978), social stratification does not only stratify people based on their economic situation. In other words, in Weberian theory social stratification is not only about ‘class’. Wright writes that “class is part of a broader multidimensional schema of stratification in Weber in which the most central contrast is between ‘class’ and ‘status’ (Wright, 2003: 5).

Furthermore, Weber distinguishes people rank based on several hierarchies which is explained in the essay of Chris Livesey entitled *Social Inequality: Theories: Weber*. Livesey mentions that there are three major concepts of social stratification in Weber’s theory, those are,

- a. Class - the relationship each group has to the means of economic production, in addition to a variety of factors such as technical skills and educational qualifications that affect an individual's market situation independently of the ownership / non-ownership of property.
- b. Status - a group that is related on the basis of a “parity of esteem” (a group of equals), the basis for which is a group's "pattern of consumption" (or “lifestyle”).
- c. Party - a group that is organized in some way for the taking / exercising of political power. Such groups may be class based, but they may also draw their membership from a variety of social classes. (Livesey, 2015: 9)

Those three categories represent people rank in more specific form. According to Livesey in quotation above, class is the rank based on economic factor, status is the rank based on people’s prestige or/and certain position in social group, while, party is the rank based on person’s power in political environment.

According to Max Weber, status means “an affective claim to social esteem in terms of positive or negative privileges” (1978: 305). Actually, status and class have a close correlation to each other because people in an upper class usually have

a higher status as well. Weber explains that although status is not determined by economical things but it may come from the economic issue.

Status may rest on class position of a distinct or an ambiguous kind. However, it is not solely determined by it: Money and an entrepreneurial position are not in themselves status qualifications, although they may lead to them; and the lack of property is not in itself a status disqualification, although this may be a reason for it. Conversely, status may influence, if not completely determine, a class position without being identical with it. (Weber, 1978: 306)

Status of a person can be typically founded on his style of life (life style), formal education (that may be empirical training or rational instruction and the corresponding forms of behavior) and hereditary or occupational prestige. In its practice, status is usually expressed through connubium (marriage), commensality, monopolistic appropriation of privileged modes of acquisition or the abhorrence of certain kinds of acquisition, and status conventions (traditions) of other kinds (Weber, 1978: 306). Weber himself put a special explanation about how lifestyle (the main cause of the status conflict in the novel) influences the boundaries of status and status honor in society,

...a central guide to social conduct in the form of a distinctive traditional ethic re-enforced by education; this ethic made personal relations central to the style of life and impressed every individual with the obligations of a status honor that was jointly held and thus a unifying bond for the status group as a whole. (Weber, 1978: 1068)

In addition, J. Dwi Narwoko and Bagong Suyanto in their 4th edition of *Sosiologi: Teks Pengantar & Terapan* concludes that status of a person can be standardized based on his position in profession, education, wealth, political achievement, inheritance, and religion (2004: 156).

Regarding the discussion of status, Narwoko and Suyanto distinguish status into two categories, those are ascribed status and achieved status. Ascribed status is status that is obtained by a person because of heredity or in the other words a man inherits the status from his family. Otherwise, achieved status is status that is obtained by a person by doing some efforts (2004: 157). Moreover, in order to affirm their status people need to do some roles. It is because the function of status and role cannot be separated to each other, “status indicates someone’s position in society, while the role shows the dynamic aspect of the status, it is kind of expected behavior of a certain individual who occupies a particular status” (Narwoko and Suyanto, 2004: 156).

The quotation explains that role shows the dynamic aspect of status and provides certain attitudes which should be done by an individual in certain status. Based on its practice, there are two kinds of role according to Narwoko and Suyanto, those are expected roles and actual roles. Expected roles are those roles which the implementation is done by considering some assessments from society. Meanwhile, the actual roles are roles that the implementation is more flexible than the expected roles and can be adjusted with the situation of the society (2004: 160).

Furthermore, in every relationship, including gap between social groups, conflict is very possible to happen. Weber said that “a social relationship will be referred to as ‘conflict’ insofar as action is oriented intentionally to carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of the other party or parties (1978:38).” The quotation implies that a conflict may happen if an individual is doing something that against the others in different social stratification. It means that different status

in social relationship may cause a status conflict as well. The status conflict can happen if one person or more from a certain status group make such a confrontation with one person or more from another status.

3.2.2. Stereotype

In social life, there is a term of stereotyping which refers to the action of judging someone. Stereotype has a closed relation to the discussion of character, since the stereotype judges someone's character. Lebowitz explains that "stereotypes, therefore, comprise an important part of character descriptions. The description of a character in universe contains a list of one or more stereotypes from which the character inherits properties, unless overridden" (Lebowitz, 1984: 11). Lebowitz also gives an example of how stereotype is involved in the process of character building. He states that,

Ways to provide the needed motivation and coherence can be seen by considering how we might answer a question such as, "Why is Aaron so cold-hearted!" Two possible answers are, "He's a door-to-door salesman" or "He got that way after his wife leet him". These answers are illustrative of two ways to make character descriptions coherent, stereotypes and past events (Lebowitz, 1984: 10).

Moreover, Anthony G. Greenwald and Mahzarin R. Banaji defines stereotype below,

A stereotype is a socially shared set of beliefs about traits that are characteristic of members of a social category. Whereas an attitude implies a consistent evaluative response to its object, a stereotype may encompass beliefs with widely diverging evaluative implications. (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995:11)

It explains that stereotype contains the list of people's characters based on their social category. The indicator of judging someone may be based on general issue

in social life but the stereotype still indicates to specific character in a person. However, the action of stereotyping can be distinguished based on several categories such as gender, race, poverty, and class.

Dovidio, Miles Hewstone, Peter Glick, and Victoria M. Esses says that stereotype does not only provide the information of the quality of someone's character but also the social role of the group's member. Furthermore, those qualities will affect emotional reactions which may arise between the members.

Stereotypes not only reflect beliefs about the traits characterizing typical group members but also contain information about other qualities such as social roles, the degree to which members of the group share specific qualities (i.e., within-group homogeneity or variability), and influence emotional reactions to group members. (Dovidio et al, 2010: 7).

However, according to Andersen, it can be identified that the stereotypes of upper class are snooty, phony, ambitious, striving and obsessing. Whereas, the stereotypes of the lower class are inherently violent, dirty, and incapable.

Middle-and working-class people stereotype upper class people as snooty, aloof, condescending, and phony. Some stereotypes held about middle class people (by both the upper class and the working class) are that they are overly ambitious, striving, and obsessed with "keeping up with the Joneses." Stereotypes about working class abound: they are perceived by the upper and middle classes as lazy and unmotivated. Finally, the upper, middle, and working class perceive lower or under class as inherently violent, dirty, and incapable of improving themselves. (Andersen, 2008:276)

In this thesis, the theory of stereotyping is used to identify the stereotypes of upper class and the lower class in *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier. The stereotyping will be based on class, but it leads to the stereotype of character and role of mistress as the upper class member and maid as the lower class member.

Thus, it can be known how the member of a lower class should act and do their role in front of the upper class and how it can cause a conflict.

3.2.3. Status Symbol

In previous discussion about the term of stereotyping, it is known that stereotype helps society differs one's characters to the others according to their membership in a certain group. In order to emphasize those stereotypes as the limit of someone's existence in his social group, society may create some symbols. Generally, the symbol is used to show, represent and remark something, as explained by Wilfred L. Guerin,

Symbol is a way of using something integral to the work to reach beyond the work and engage the world of value outside the work. It might be an incident that takes on meaning, such as the apparent happenstance of events in a naturalistic writer like Thomas Hardy; it might be the conventional object or device—a crucifix, a color, a tree—that becomes symbolic of meanings within and without the poem, story, or play. (Guerin, 2004:106)

According to Guerin, symbol may be formed in certain object or incident which can have an implicit meaning in its existence within poem, story, or play. Symbol may engage the value inside the literary work and the value in real life (outside the work). Since this study is discussing the issue of status conflict regarding social inequality, there is a term of 'status symbol'. J. Dwi Narwoko and Bagong Suyanto define 'status symbol' as certain characteristic of someone's status that can be found through the way he lives, dresses, socializes, etc.

The status of a person in society can be seen through his daily life as the certain characteristics. In sociology it is called as status symbol... the status symbol can be seen through the way someone dresses, associates, chooses where to live, and so on. (Narwoko and Suyanto, 2004: 158)

However, the status symbol in this novel is used to clarify the stereotypes of the upper class and the lower class and to remark the different status of woman as a mistress (high status) and woman as a maid (low status). The status symbol in this novel is formed in an object (pearl) that can be identified through the way the mistress and the maid should dress.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL INEQUALITY REFLECTED IN TRACY

CHEVALIER'S *GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING*: STATUS

CONFLICT CAUSED BY BROKEN STEREOTYPES AND

EXPECTED ROLE

4.1. Analysis of Intrinsic Elements

This chapter contains the analysis of the theories' application on the novel of Tracy Chevalier entitled *Girl with A Pearl Earring*. The discussion contains the correlation of the intrinsic and extrinsic elements theories applied in the novel. This study will use sociological approach and focus on the problem of status. It is identified that *Girl with A Pearl Earring* illustrates the issue of status conflict which is caused by the broken stereotypes, expected role and status symbol done by a member of a social group which then break the boundaries of a different status.

4.1.1 Character and Characterization

The story of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is told through Griet's point of view. The author of the novel makes Griet as the narrator by using "I" on her behalf. In characterizing the characters, the author of the novel implicitly explains the characters through Griet's point of view and the conversation between the characters.

a. Griet

Griet is a common 16 years old girl with wide eyes and a cap in her head to cover her hair. She is brave, frontal, handy, and attractive. She is brave and frontal because she used to speak what she thinks although she is a maid who basically must refrain herself to not to speak anything by her own. This personality can be seen through Griet's action. This happened when Griet cannot refrain herself for asking a private question about her master's family business.

She's not happy, of course, but she's more afraid of his anger." Maria Thins hesitated. "There's another reason why she's not so concerned. I may as well tell you now. She's carrying a child again." "Another?" I let slip. I was surprised that Catharina would want another child when they were so short of money. Maria Thins frowned at me. "Watch yourself, girl." "I'm sorry, madam." I instantly regretted having spoken even that one word. It was not for me to say how big their family should be. (Chevalier, 1999:148)

Catharina is being pregnant for her sixth child. When Griet said "another?- I let slip", it implies that she frontally says the word because she is amazed about Catharina having her sixth child. However, when Maria Thins said "Watch yourself, girl" as her respond to what Griet says, it shows that, as a maid, Griet's amazement toward her mistress is too brave, such a rude attitude and not appropriate. It is because Catharina's pregnancy is not Griet's business, "It was not for me to say how big their family should be." Another quotation that shows how frontal and brave Griet is can be seen in page 70,

I was still pondering when he entered. "Griet, you've not yet cleared up. Be quick about it—I've come to help you move the table." "I'm sorry for being so slow, sir. It's just—" He seemed surprised that I wanted to say something—"I'm so used to the objects where they are that I hate to move them." (Chevalier, 1999: 70)

It can be seen that Griet bravely makes an excuse as her response to Mr. Vermeer who warn her for being slow in cleaning his studio. It implies Griet's frontal and brave attitude since the quotation contains the statement that Mr. Vermeer "seemed surprise" finds a maid like Griet bravely answer his warning.

Besides, she is also handy and diligent because she can learn fast what her master tells her about painting. This character of Griet can be seen through the conversation between her and Maria Thins below,

Then Maria Thins said, "How long have you been assisting him, girl?" "A few weeks, madam." "He's been painting faster these last weeks, I've noticed." I raised my eyes. Her face was calculating. "You help him to paint faster, girl," she said in a low voice, "and you'll keep your place here. Not a word to my daughter or Tanneke, now." (Chevalier, 1999: 117)

When Maria Thin finds out that Griet has secretly assisted Mr. Vermeer, instead of being angry, she agrees it by saying "You help him to paint faster, girl". It also implies that Maria Thin admits Griet capability in painting so that she can help Mr. Vermeer. Besides, Maria Thins had ever said that Griet is a clever Girl, "You're a clever girl, you can work that out" (Chevalier, 1999: 63)

Griet is also an attractive girl because she manages to make two men want to possess her. This character can be analyzed through the way the two men act toward her. The two men are Van Ruijven, the patron of Vermeer family and Pieter, the son of Vermeer family's butcher.

I was on the stairs when I heard van Ruijven say, "Where's that wide-eyed maid? Gone already? I wanted to have a proper look at her... Late in the evening, van Ruijven manage to corner me in the hallway as I was passing along it with lighted candle and a wine jug. "Ah, the wide-eyed maid," he cried, leaning into me. "Hello, my girl." He grabbed my chin in his hand, his other hand pulling the candle up to light my face. (Chevalier, 1999: 73, 83)

When Van Ruijven said that he wanted to have a proper look at Griet, it implies that he has an interest to Griet. That indication is emphasized by Van Ruijven when he called Griet as his girl while he leaned into her and grabbed her chin. The implication that such a powerful and wealthy man like Van Ruijven interests to Griet indirectly shows that Griet's enchantment.

Another man who falls in love with Griet is Pieter, the son of Vermeer family's butcher. Pieter even asks Griet to marry him, "Pieter did not raise his voice, but we all heard his words. "I've spoken to your father this morning, and he has agreed that we may marry now you are eighteen. You can leave here and come to me. Today." (Chevalier, 1999: 207). This is a conversation between Griet and Pieter which happens in Griet's eighteenth birthday in front of Vermeer's house. Based on the last two quotations above, it can be concluded that Pieter and Van Ruijven attracted to Griet. It implies that Griet is an attractive Girl since she is only a maid but can make those men want to possess her.

b. Johannes Vermeer

Johannes Vermeer is a cold and taciturn man in grey eyes and angular face, no moustache or beard who is very passionate in painting. This characterization is analyzed through Griet's point of view.

The man was watching me, his eyes grey like the sea. He had a long, angular face, and his expression was steady, in contrast to his wife's, which flickered like a candle. He had no beard or moustache... He neither smiled nor did not smile at me. It was hard to meet his eyes (Chevalier, 1999: 11, 42)

In the quotation Griet directly describes Mr. Vermeer's physical appearance and his attitude towards Griet. When Griet says "his expression was steady", it implies that

Mr. Vermeer is a cold man. Otherwise, Griet's statement about Mr. Vermeer that he is "in contrast to his wife's, which flickered like a candle" implies that Mr. Vermeer is a taciturn man. Whereas, Mr. Vermeer passion in painting can be seen through the dialogue between him and Griet,

"But why do you look at it, sir, when you can look at your own painting?"
"You do not understand." He tapped the box. "This is a tool I use it to help me see, so that I am able to make the painting." "But you use your eyes to see." "True, but my eyes do not always see everything." (Chevalier, 1999: 59-60)

Mr. Vermeer and Griet are talking about a special stuff which is used by Mr. Vermeer for seeing his own painting. He tells Griet that he can see the painting well through that special stuff so he can be able to make a perfect painting. According to Mr. Vermeer, seeing the painting through his eyes is only enough to make a good painting but not for the best one. However, because of his passion of paintings, Mr. Vermeer always wants to make a perfect painting.

c. Catharina

Catharina, Johannes Vermeer's wife, is an ill-tempered and arrogant woman with brown eyes and blond hair. Catharina's physical appearance can be seen through Griet's description, "The woman's face was like an oval serving plate, flashing at times, dull at others. Her eyes were two light brown buttons, a color I had rarely seen coupled with blond hair," (Chevalier, 1999:4).

Catharina is arrogant as shown in quotation "She never checks, she never notices. She just orders us about because she feels she has to" (Chevalier, 1999: 50). "She" is referring to Catharina and "us" is referring to the maids. It implies that Catharina used to order the maids only because "she feels she has to" which means

that Catharina realizes her status in the household is higher than the maids so she uses her power to order the maid as she wants.

Besides, Catharina's ill-tempered can be identified through Griet's opinion that, "Given her nature, Catharina was surprisingly patient with the baby, but snapped at everyone else, even her husband" (Chevalier, 1999: 84). It obviously mentions that Catharina used to be snappy to everyone including her husband.

d. Van Ruijven

Van Ruijven is a powerful man, especially for Vermeer's family. He is very ambitious regarding to what he want. When Van Ruijven decides to make Griet to be his, he continuously ask and force Mr. Vermeer to paint Griet. It is told in this novel that when Van Ruijven want to claim something or someone, he will ask Mr. Vermeer to paint it.

...Van Ruijven announced, "but I would like to be in the painting. I will play the lute." After a pause he added, "I want her in it too." I did not have to look at him to know he had gestured at me.... As I was leaving I heard Catharina say in a gay voice, "What a fine idea! Like that painting with you and the maid in the red dress. Do you remember her?" (Chevalier. 1999: 154)

The conversation above happens between Van Ruijven, Mr. Vermeer, and Catharina when Van Ruijven directly asks Mr. Vermeer to paint him with Griet as he said "I want her in it too" in which "her" is referring to Griet. Meanwhile, when Catharina said "Like that painting with you and the maid in the red dress", Catharina emphasizes that this kind of situation has happened before. Before Griet, Mr. Vermeer has painted Van Ruijven with another maid who is finally known carrying

Van Ruijven's child. This implies that by asking Mr. Vermeer to paint Griet, Griet may be the next maid as the maid in the red dress.

“It was several years ago now. It seems van Ruijven wanted one of his kitchen maids to sit for a painting with him. They dressed her in one of his wife's gowns, a red one, and van Ruijven made sure there was wine in the painting so he could get her to drink every time they sat together. Sure enough, before the painting was finished she was carrying van Ruijven's child.” (Chevalier, 1999: 126)

The incident about a maid in the red dress then shows another personality of Van Ruijven. However, he is known as a man who has less respect for women. The incident of a maid in the red dress itself shows that Van Ruijven is not loyal to his wife because she makes his maid pregnant while he already has a wife and daughter. This personality of Van Ruijven is also admitted by Maria Thins.

I said the one sensible thing I knew she would understand. “I do not wish to sit with van Ruijven, madam. I do not think his intentions are honorable.” My words were stiff. “His intentions are never honorable when it comes to young women.” (Chevalier, 1999: 157)

In the conversation above, Griet and Maria Thins are talking about Van Ruijven and the two of them explicitly describe Van Ruijven as a man whose intentions are never honorable to women. The word “never honorable” to women implies that he always looks down on women.

4.2 Social Inequality Reflected in Tracy Chevalier's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*: Status Conflict Caused by Broken Stereotype and Expected Role

Girl with a Pearl Earring contains external conflict which happens between Griet and Catharina related to their relationship with Johannes Vermeer and Van Ruijven. The conflict between Griet and Catharina is identified as status conflict, a maid and

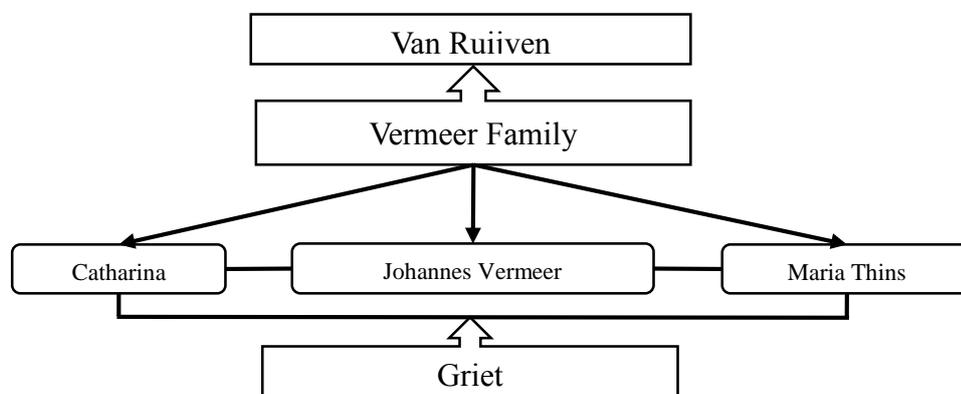
a mistress, in a households. Griet is represented as the lower class than Catharina based on economic situation which means that Catharina's status is higher than her. Otherwise, there are some deviations in some cases regarding their status. This uncommon situation causes status conflict between them.

4.2.1. The Status Stratification

According to Max Weber's theory which has been explained in the previous chapter, status may be led by economic situation and it may rest on class position. In addition, status stratification itself can be identified based on several determinants such as wealth, inheritance or hereditary prestige, lifestyle and formal education.

The first determinant of status stratification is wealth or economic situation. Therefore, it is necessary to start the discussion of status in this chapter by identifying the class stratification of Griet, Catharina, Johannes Vermeer and Van Ruijven. Class stratification in *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is classified in three types, those are upper class, middle class and lower class. Van Ruijven is the upper class, Johannes Vermeer and Catharina as the middle class, and Griet as the lower class.

Table 1.2 the Class Stratification



Van Ruijven is in upper class than Vermeer's family because Van Ruijven is the patron of Mr. Vermeer. The representation of Van Ruijven as the upper class can be seen from the conversation between Maria Thins and Griet when they are talking about Van Ruijven who asks Mr. Vermeer to paint Griet. In this case Maria Thins explains that it will be difficult for Mr. Vermeer to refuse Van Ruijven's order since Van Ruijven is his patron, "...Van Ruijven is his patron, and a wealthy and powerful man. We cannot afford to offend him" (Chevalier, 1999:157). It clearly shows that Van Ruijven's class and status is higher than Mr. Vermeer.

Whereas, middle class is represented by Vermeer's family which consists of Johannes Vermeer, Catharina and Maria Thins,

I was chopping vegetables in the kitchen when I heard voices outside our front door—a woman's, bright as polished brass, and a man's, low and dark like the wood of the table I was working on. They were the kind of voices we heard rarely in our house. I could hear rich carpets in their voices, books and pearls and fur. (Chevalier, 1999: 3)

Mr. and Mrs. Vermeer come to Griet's house for recruiting Griet as their maid. The statement "They were the kind of voices we heard rarely in our house. I could hear rich carpets in their voices, books and pearls and fur" clearly implies that Mr. and Mrs. Vermeer is in upper class than Griet, especially when Griet then becomes Vermeer's maid. Meanwhile, in page 11 there is statement, "...they knew what happened to families when a man lost his trade. It would be something to discuss later—young Griet become a maid, her father brought the family low" (Chevalier, 1999:11) obviously shows that Griet is in the lower class than Johannes Vermeer, Catharina and Van Ruijven.

Based on the explanation above it can be concluded that Van Ruijven is in the highest class, Vermeer's family is in the middle class since the family is in lower class than Van Ruijven, and Griet is in the lowest class because she works as a maid in Vermeer's family.

The second determinant is inheritance or hereditary prestige. In this factor, a person may claim their status by inheriting it from his parents. Based on the class stratification above, Catharina gets her status from her mother and her marriage relationship with Johannes Vermeer. Catharina is identified in higher status than Griet since Catharina is the daughter of Maria Thins, the owner of the house where Vermeer's family live. It is confirmed by the statement of one of Catharina's daughter to Griet in the day Griet arrives in that house for the first time...“Our grandmother's is Maria. Maria Thins. This is her house” (Chevalier, 1999: 15). However, Griet also gets her status as the lower class and maid because of the situation of her parents. This means that Catharina's status as the mistress and Griet status as the maid is identified as ascribed status. Furthermore, this determinant shows that Catharina's status as the mistress is higher than Griet's status.

The next determinant is life style since there are stereotypes of upper and lower class regarding lifestyle as discussed in sub-chapter Status Symbol. Regarding lifestyle, there is a stereotype that a lower class, especially maid for this case, usually does not wear kind of fur, satin, and jewels.

“After a moment he called up to me. When I appeared he said, “Griet, get my wife’s yellow mantle, and her pearl necklace and earrings... Instead I went to Maria Thins in the Crucifixion room, who unlocked Catharina’s jewelry box and handed me the necklace and earrings. Then I got out the mantle from the cupboard in the great hall, shook it out and folded it carefully over my arm. I had never touched it before. I let my nose sink into the fur—it was very soft, like a baby rabbit’s. (Chevalier, 1999: 127-128)

Mr. Vermeer’s statement when he asks Griet to get Catharina’s fur mantle and pearl jewels in order to use them as the property for painting implies that those luxurious things belong to Catharina. Otherwise, Griet’s statement “I had never touched it before. I let my nose sink into the fur” implies that those things have ever belonged to her. This comparison emphasizes the status line between Griet and Catharina based on their lifestyle.

The last determinant is the education background. There is a stereotype that a maid is believed as the one who lacks in education. In fact, Griet lacks in education as written in the novel, “I prayed he would not ask me to write something, as he had van Ruijven’s wife. My father had taught me to write my name, but little else...” (Chevalier, 1999:131). It shows that Griet does not really know how to write which implies that she lacks in education.

4.2.2. Stereotype

It has been explained in Theoretical Framework that the discussion of stereotype in this thesis will be based on class category which is divided into upper, middle and lower class. Society stereotypes of the upper and middle class are snooty, phony, ambitious, and striving. Otherwise, the lower class is stereotyped as bad in manner, dirty, and incapable. There is Van Ruijven who is represented as the upper class

while Johannes Vermeer and Catharina as the middle class. Besides, the lower class is represented by Griet.

The characterization of Van Ruijven, Johannes Vermeer and Catharina as the upper class is suitable with the stereotypes of upper class in society, those are snooty, phony, and ambitious. The snooty character, for example, can be seen in Catharina attitudes towards her maid. One of Catharina's maid once said, "She just orders us about because she feels she has to" (Chevalier, 1999: 50). It implies that Catharina is snooty as she orders her maid just because she realizes that her position in the household makes her has a right to do that.

The phony character is reflected in Van Ruijven's character. Van Ruijven is described as a wealthy and powerful person but his "intentions are never honourable when it comes to young women" (Chevalier, 1999: 157). It implies that Van Ruijven is phony because his deplorable attitude towards women is in contrast with his esteemed status. The phony characteristic is also represented by Johannes Vermeer family which seems to be wealthy but experiences financial difficulties. The family, especially Catharina, may manage to have some luxurious dresses like satin, fur and pearl but they can be short in money to pay more servants for their households.

... "With a big house like this, and your mistress's wealth, and the master's paintings," I added, "could they not afford another maid? Or a cook?" "Huh," Tanneke snorted. "They can barely manage to pay you." I was surprised—the coins amounted to so little in my hand each week. It would take me years of work to be able to buy something as fine as the yellow mantle that Catharina kept so carelessly folded in her cupboard. It did not seem possible that they could be short of money. (Chevalier, 1999: 49-50)

The ambitious character can be seen in Van Ruijven through the way he wants Griet, “And you know, I will have you anyway when I get that painting” (Chevalier, 1999: 202). In addition, Johannes Vermeer’s passion in painting can also be identified as ambitious character because he wants to be a perfectionist painter. It is implied in Maria Thin’s saying, “He doesn’t paint just what he sees, but what will suit,” (Chevalier, 1999:36). Besides, the explanation in sub-chapter character that Mr. Vermeer even uses special stuff to pay close attention to his paintings also reinforces his ambition.

On the other hand, there are some stereotypes of lower class which are represented by Griet as a maid character. However, the stereotypes of lower class such as bad in manner, dirty and incapable are suitable with what is written in the novel.

She did not look at me, but I knew she was thinking that maids were not to be trusted with pearls... She handed me some coins, my wages for the days I had worked. “Off you go now, to tell your mother all about us, I suspect.”(Chevalier, 1999:43, 45)

“Stealing and tempting the master of the house—that was what mistresses were always looking for in maids” (Chevalier, 1999: 141)

I prayed he would not ask me to write something, as he had van Ruijven’s wife. My father had taught me to write my name, but little else. (Chevalier, 1999:131)

Those quotations shows the stereotypes of the maid that is identified as them who is untrustworthy, they can gossip their master life and will be stealing and tempting their master. Moreover, maid is stereotyped to be incapable or lack in education as Griet said that she do not learn much about writing. Maid is also characterized to never wear valuable thing like pearl. “Sir,” I began, gripping the hard, cool carving,

“I cannot do it.” “Do what, Griet?” He was genuinely surprised. “What you are going to ask me to do. I cannot wear it. Maids do not wear pearls.” (Chevalier, 1999: 194).

However, stereotypes do not only reflect the characters of people from certain social group but also provide the beliefs of their social role. Based on the explanation in the previous chapter, this stereotypes of role can be classified as the expected role of maid. It can be concluded from *Girl with A Pearl Earring* that a maid roles are the obligations to do what her master tells her to do and not to interfere in her master’s business.

In the narration of the novel Griet once said, “But he was my master. I was meant to do as he said” (Chevalier, 1999:57). That statement clearly confirms and emphasizes the stereotype of role that a maid should do whatever her master tells her to do. Another social role of maid is that a maid should not interfere in her master’s business. It is confirmed by the quotation below which is taken from the conversation between Griet and another maid named Tanneke. Griet wants to know about the past story of Catharina and her brother but Tanneke emphasizes that it is not something to be known for a maid like them.

“Tell me about what happened when Catharina’s brother came here last...For a moment Tanneke sat up straighter, until she remembered who was asking. “That’s not your business,” she snapped. “That’s family business, not for the likes of you.”(Chevalier, 1999:134)

Girl with a Pearl Earring contains the story between the upper class and the lower class. The characters in this novel does not only characterized based on their images created by the author, but they also represent the characteristic of people in

upper and lower class. The characteristic based on their membership in certain social group can be identified by stereotypes. Van Ruijven, Johannes Vermeer and Catharina who represent the upper class and middle class member is stereotyped as snooty, phony, ambitious, and striving. Meanwhile the stereotype of Griet as the lower class are bad in manner, incapable and never wear valuable thing. Besides, Griet's role is stereotyped to should do what her master tells her to do and should not interfere in her master's business.

4.2.3. Status Symbol

The novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring* contains a status symbol that is pearl. Pearl symbolizes class discrepancy because it differentiates the status between maid and the mistress. It is believed that something valuable and expensive such as pearl, fur, and satin are kind of women dresses which can be only wore by mistresses or women from upper and middle class.

She (Van Ruijven's wife) wore a mantle of rich yellow satin trimmed with white ermine, and a fashionable five-pointed red ribbon in her hair. A window lit her from the left, falling across her face and tracing the delicate curve of her forehead and nose. She was tying a string of pearls around her neck, holding the ribbons up, her hands suspended in the air. (Chevalier, 1999: 36)

“What you are going to ask me to do. I cannot wear it. Maids do not wear pearls.”(Chevalier, 1999:195)

Griet's description about the painting of Van Ruijven's wife is in contrast with her situation. When she is being painted by Mr. Vermeer, Van Ruijven's wife has beautiful and valuable dresses like fur, satin, and pearl with her. Though, Griet feels that she cannot do the same because of the different status between her and Van Ruijven's wife. From the comparison of the two quotations, it is known that both

of Griet and Van Ruijven's wife are being painted by Mr. Vermeer, but Van Ruijven's wife deserves to wear pearl and satin while Griet does not. Although maid and mistress are women, but it is known that pearl is not something that belongs to the maid. Still, the maid in this novel is forced by her master to wear it. This deviation of pearl is a symbol that leads to become the big conflict of the story.

4.2.4. Status Conflict Caused by Broken Stereotype and Expected Role

The conflict in this novel is more about status problems between Catharina and Griet that are caused by broken stereotypes and expected roles. Since the first time Griet arrives in Vermeer's family, Catharina has already disliked and felt uneasy towards her. Griet realizes it and she has stated it in the narration, "I avoided Catharina when I could. It had been clear from the moment she'd seen me chopping vegetables in my mother's kitchen that she disliked me" (Catharina, 1999: 49). Then, Catharina's feeling towards Griet is becoming worse and worse. It is because Griet has an authority to maintain her husband important painting studio while she has not, as quoted below,

She was jealous of me. I had cleaned the studio, where she was not allowed, where no one, it seemed, could go except me and Maria Thins. ...She would not come into the room to look at the painting. It seemed she never entered the studio... That's why master won't allow her in his room unless he's there... (Chevalier, 1999:38, 41, 55)

Based on that statement, it can be said that Griet has already knew Catharina's attitude towards her. Griet assumes that Catharina's jealousy is caused by her authority in Mr. Vermeer precious painting studio. Griet is allowed entering and

maintaining the studio while Catharina, Mr. Vermeer's wife, is not allowed to and it seems that she never enters the studio.

This situation makes Griet has some conflicts with the member of Vermeer's family,

“I did nothing,” I protested. “No, but you have managed to make a few enemies. Why is that? We've never had so much trouble with other help.” She chuckled, but behind her laugh she was sober. “But he has backed you, in his way,” she continued, “and that is more powerful than anything Catharina or Cornelia or Tanneke or even I may say against you.” (Chevalier, 1999:147)

When Griet has been slandered for stealing Catharina's comb, almost all members of the Vermeer family believe that Griet steal the comb. Though, Mr. Vermeer helps Griet to prove her innocent. As the result, although Griet does not steal the comb, Maria Thins thinks that she has managed “to make a few enemies” in Vermeer's family. Most of the family members hate Griet and have conflict with her. In that family, Griet is a maid but in some cases she can be more powerful than her mistress, Catharina, because Catharina's husband, Mr. Vermeer, seems to be in Griet's side all the time. It indicates that there is a status deviation arises in the story.

However, that situation then leads to the stereotype of maid that maid is stealing and tempting her master as it is shown, “stealing and tempting the master of the house—that was what mistresses were always looking for in maids” (Chevalier, 1999: 141). Though, this stereotype is broken because of the fact that Griet neither steals the comb nor tempts her master as Catharina thinks.

In this part, it can be seen that the situation aims to status conflict in Vermeer's household. At first, Catharina just envy with Griet because of Griet's

allowance to be in Mr. Vermeer's painting studio which means that Mr. Vermeer will spend much more time with Griet in the painting studio than with her. Even, this case has already indicates that as Mr. Vermeer's wife, Catharina is one step behind Griet. Then, Catharina becomes more jealousy and envy when Mr. Vermeer is in Griet's side for the comb incident, so the status conflict between mistress and her maid become increasingly visible. This assumption is reinforced with the quotation below which implies that Catharina seems to fear Griet,

Some things changed for me in the house after the trouble with the comb. Catharina's treatment of me was the greatest surprise. I had expected that she would be even more difficult than before—give me more work, berate me whenever she could, make me as uncomfortable as possible. Instead she seemed to fear me. (Chevalier, 1999: 149)

In addition to the stereotype that maids will definitely tempt and steal their master and the fact that Mr. Vermeer support Griet in comb incident, Catharina thinks and assumes that Griet has tempted and stole Mr. Vermeer from her.

After that incident, Griet is being slandered again. It happens when Van Ruijven, the patron of Johannes Vermeer, is being attracted to her. He wants Johannes Vermeer to paint her and Mr. Vermeer can't refuse the order as Van Ruijven is a powerful person. Griet tries to refuse but once again it is not her who can make the choice. When painting Griet, Mr. Vermeer has Griet wearing a pearl earring which belongs to Catharina. This is absolutely a big problem when Catharina finds it. As this problem is not her fault, although she is a maid, Griet cannot admit that this is her fault as Catharina wants her to do... "No, madam." Although I knew it would be easier for everyone if I said I had stolen them, I could

not lie about myself. “Don’t lie to me. Maids steal all the time. You took my earrings!” (1999: 213)

It will be easier if Griet just admits that she has stolen the pearl since she is also a maid who has been stereotyped as someone who will steal. Though, Griet chooses to break her stereotype and expected role as a maid again by saying “NO” to her mistress.

Moreover, this pearl earring incident causes the status conflict between Catharina as a mistress and Griet as Catharina’s maid. It has been explained before that lifestyle is one of the status determinants. Wearing pearl in this novel is kind of a lifestyle of upper class woman. Besides, pearl in this novel becomes a status symbol that differs the status of mistress and maid. Although Griet and Catharina are women, but they are different in class and status so the right for wearing the pearl is different as well. When Griet finally wears the pearl earrings, especially Catharina’s pearl earring, it indirectly implies the broken line which separates Catharina’s status as the mistress in Vermeer’s household.

Another status determinants which is also broken is the formal education factor. As mentioned in the literary review, the formal education factor in status discussion is divided in two categories, those are empirical training or rational instruction and the corresponding forms of behavior. In this novel, it can be said that Griet learns and gets some knowledge in painting while assisting Mr. Vermeer in his painting studio. In addition, Mr. Vermeer and Griet also shares the same interest in painting arts since Griet was also a daughter of tile painter.

He gave me instructions in the morning and expected them to be done by the next day. The colors themselves made up for the troubles I had hiding what I was doing. I came to love grinding the things he brought from the apothecary—bones, white lead, madder, massicot— to see how bright and pure I could get the colors. . . . From him I learned too how to wash substances to rid them of impurities and bring out the true colors. (Chevalier, 1999:108)

Griet's narration above regarding her activity in assisting her master. It also has been explained in the discussion of Griet's character that by the day Griet works in Mr. Vermeer's painting studio, Griet is asked to assist Mr. Vermeer because she can make Mr. Vermeer paints faster. It directly implies that Griet can learn and improve her ability in painting. This improvement of Griet's ability in painting is also being acknowledge by Mr. Vermeer. When Griet tells Mr. Vermeer her opinion about one of his painting, Mr. Vermeer said that he had not thought he would learn something from a maid (Chevalier, 1999: 136).

The fact that Griet can learn and even gives some opinion to Mr. Vermeer's painting is the form of broken stereotypes of maids that maid may incapable in improving themselves. Otherwise, it also breaks formal education factor as one of status determinant in this novel. Furthermore, based on those happenings that have been explained above, it can be listed the broken stereotypes and roles done by Griet as follow.

Firstly, Griet refuses Van Ruijven, a married man who wants her to be his. She also tries to refuse Mr. Vermeer for painting her although at last she is finally being painted by Mr. Vermeer. However, Griet's refusal means that Griet does not do what her master or people in higher status than her tell her to do. Besides, his

refusal towards Van Ruijven also proves that she breaks the stereotype that maid is always tempting her master.

Secondly, Griet refuses to admit that she steals Catharina's comb. Griet does not steal the comb, but she thinks that it will be easier if she admits that she steals it in order to avoid the bigger conflict. It is because of the stereotype that maid is always suspected as a thief when the master loses their things. Her refusal means that she breaks the stereotype that maid is always stealing.

Thirdly, Griet breaks the stereotype that maid is incapable because she is able to learn about painting. Even, Mr. Vermeer has ever taken his advice about painting.

The last, Griet refuses to admit that she steals Catharina's pearl earring. In fact, she wears the pearl earring but it is because she is forced to wear the pearl earring by Mr. Vermeer. In this point Griet breaks two stereotypes at once. Besides breaking the stereotype that maid is always stealing, Griet also breaks the stereotype that maid never wears pearl. When Griet wears Catharina's pearl earring, it means that she breaks the boundary which differs her status as a maid with Catharina's status as a mistress. When Catharina knows that Griet wears her pearl earring, Catharina believes that Griet steals it and tries to tempt Mr. Vermeer.

Griet works as a maid in Vermeer's family which shows her status and class as the lower class. Related to her membership in the lower class, she gets some stereotypes and has an expected role to be fulfilled. Griet breaks her stereotype and when it causes a conflict she breaks her expected role by refusing and rebelling her

master. Therefore, Griet refusal and rebellion against Van Ruijven, Mr. Vermeer and Catharina can be named as a form of class struggle. This class struggle is done by Griet in order to protect her honor and the truth that she does not steal the comb and the pearl earring or tempt her master.

4.2.5. The impacts of the Status Conflict

In every conflict there must be a party which is harmed more than the others. However, the status conflict between Griet and Catharina ends with Griet is being accused of stealing Catharina's pearl earring and tempting Mr. Vermeer. Mr. Vermeer and Maria Thins actually know the truth, but they do not tell Catharina about it. In this novel, as the impact of the conflict, Griet chooses to leave Vermeer family. It is done to defend her honor and the truth because she does not steal the pearl and tempt Mr. Vermeer. Yet, there is no one in the family believes in her and wants to defend her including her master who actually knows the truth.

Suddenly she groaned. Flinging the knife away, she clutched her belly. The knife skidded across the tiles to my feet, then spun and spun, slower and slower, as we all stared at it. It came to a stop with the blade pointed at me. I was meant to pick it up. That was what maids were meant to do—pick up their master's and mistress's things and put them back in their place. I looked up and met his eye, holding his grey gaze for a long moment. I knew it was for the last time. I did not look at anyone else. In his eyes I thought I could see regret. I did not pick up the knife. I turned and walked from the room, down the stairs and through the doorway, (Chevalier, 1999:215)

Catharina is angry with Griet for wearing her pearl earring and then she throws a blade to Griet. The blade falls in Griet's feet and as a maid in Vermeer's family, Griet should pick the blade but she does not. At last, Griet runs away from

Vermeer's family and what she does can be identified as a rebellion from the lower class toward the upper class.

Ten years later after the incident, Griet who already has a new life is called to come to the Vermeer's house. As the death comes to her master, her master has a last will to give Griet the pearl earring she has worn a long time ago. He asks Catharina for that and it is stated through Catharina says, "He has decided for you, and for me. They are yours now, so take them. This act of giving the pearl earring symbolizes that Mr. Vermeer wants to prove Griet's innocent for the last incident. Besides, it also symbolizes that after getting the pearl earring Griet is free as a maid. "... A maid came free." (Chevalier, 1999: 232-233)...that is how Griet can clean up her name and be free as a maid. However, Griet's status as a free-man is identified as achieved status since she gets this status with some efforts in order to protect her honor.

In the story of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier, Griet represents the maid who does not always have a bad manner, untrustworthy and incapable. She breaks the stereotypes of maid by becoming an honest person in doing her job. From *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, it can be learnt that not everyone who is stereotyped or judged as the bad one will really have a bad character. Besides, this story has a moral value that every person has a right to protect his honor, gets an equal treatment from the others, and as human people have to be honest in everything we do.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier is a story that brings up the issue of social inequality. It tells about a girl named Griet from the lower class who has status conflict with her mistress as she breaks her stereotypes and expected roles as a maid. This conflict begins when Griet has an authority to maintain the precious painting studio of her master, Mr. Vermeer while her mistress, Catharina, is not allowed to enter it. The jealousy of Catharina makes her gives difficulties to Griet. In the end of the story, when Griet is forced to wear Catharina's pearl earring she is slandered for stealing the pearl and tempting Mr. Vermeer. This problem of pearl earring then leads to a status problem because pearl in this novel is the status symbol which differs the status of Catharina and Griet. As the result, Griet rebels to protect her honor since she is not stealing the pearl or tempting her master.

Regarding to social inequality, *Girl with a Pearl Earring* represents three group of society, those are the upper class, the middle class and the lower class. There is Van Ruijven who represents the upper class, Vermeer family (Johannes Vermeer and his wife, Catharina) as the middle class and Griet as the lower class.

In society, there are some stereotypes which is created to identify and judge a person based on their existence as the member of a certain group. The character of Van Ruijven, Johannes Vermeer and Catharina are suitable with the stereotype of the upper and middle class which are snooty, phony and ambitious. Meanwhile, Griet's character is not suitable with her stereotype as the lower class as well as

maid. As the member of the lower class, maids is stereotyped as them who is dirty, untrustworthy, stealing and tempting their master, incapable or lack in education and usually not wearing valuable thing. In addition, maids also have expected role to do what their master told them to do and to never interfere in their master business.

The class stratification above does not only use to stereotype the characters but also reflects the status order between those characters. The class stratification, which is based on the economic situation, shows that the characters in upper and middle class is in a higher status than Griet. Yet, the indicators that can determines someone's status is not only the 'class', but also life style, formal education (that may be empirical training or rational instruction and the corresponding forms of behaviour) and hereditary or occupational prestige. In its practice, status is usually expressed through connubium (marriage), commensality, monopolistic appropriation of privileged modes of acquisition or the abhorrence of certain kinds of acquisition, and status conventions (traditions) of other kinds. Status itself can be divided into ascribed status and achieved status.

Catharina's status as a mistress and Griet's status as a maid is kind of ascribed status. It is expressed through the household of Vermeer family. Those status determinants above ought to define the status line between Catharina and Griet. Though, those determinants are broken as Griet breaks her stereotypes as a maid. Firstly, Griet refuses Van Ruijven, a married man who wants her to be his which proves that she breaks the stereotype that maid is always tempting her master. Secondly, Griet refuses to admit that she steals Catharina's comb and pearl earring

which means that she breaks the stereotype that maid is always stealing. Thirdly, Griet breaks the stereotype that maid is incapable, the education determinants, because she is able to learn about painting yet has an authority to maintain Mr. Vermeer painting studio while Catharina has not. The last, Griet wears Catharina's pearl earring which shows that she breaks the stereotype that maid never wears valuable thing (pearl), the lifestyle determinants that lines the status boundaries between her and Catharina.

Griet is slandered for doing those bad things because she is stereotyped like that. Since Griet breaks the stereotypes or in the other words she is not doing those bad things, she rebels and breaks her expected role as maid to always become obedient to her master for protecting her honor as the innocent. Several years after the rebellion, Griet is called to Vermeer house for getting the pearl earring as the last will of Mr. Vermeer. This symbolizes that Mr. Vermeer wants to prove Griet innocent for the last incident and officially makes her free as Vermeer's maid. The new status of Griet as a free-man is identified as achieved status since Griet gets it with some efforts.

In the Vermeer household, Catharina may get the mistress status since she is married with Mr. Vermeer and it is higher than Griet's status as a maid. Though, regarding Mr. Vermeer precious painting studio Griet may in a higher status than her. The mistress status of Catharina become obscure by Griet's existence in the household since Griet has an authority to maintain the studio which makes her can spend her time with Mr. Vermeer better than Catharina. It also implies that Griet and Mr. Vermeer shares the same interest. The education determinant which should

differs that Greit is in a lower status than Catharina is also broken. Regarding pearl earring, although Catharina and Griet are woman but they does not have the same right in wearing the pearl. However, when Griet ends up wearing the pearl, the deviation of status between Griet and Catharina is clearly identified.

The two majors of intrinsic elements in this novel such as characters and conflict are used to raise the status conflict of the story. The status conflict itself can be analyzed by using the theory of Max Weber, stereotype and status symbol. As the result of the analysis, it can be identified the stereotypes and roles of maid as the lower class which become the cause of class conflict in this novel. However, this novel implies that in society there is class stratification which has stereotypes and social role for each. Once the stereotype is broken it may cause social conflict when each class makes such a confrontation.

Girl with a Pearl Earring contains a moral value that a person may be judged as a bad one but it does not mean that he is bad. Besides, every person has a right to protect their honor, get an equal treatment from the others and as human we have to be honest in everything we do.

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