

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In daily life, we are surrounded by evidence of the position and role of women in society. In general woman's natural roles are still regarded as caretakers and house wives, they are expected to take off time from work and other activities to take care for their children and do house hold (Woods, 2001:55). In other words they do not have the similar acceses to men to participate in public life.

In patriarchy, a social system positioning a man as a superior and a woman as inferior creates the pattern of sex role behaviour which embedded deeply in the mind of both man and woman (Anderson, 1997:13). It means that the system of the culture and their dependent to men, positioning woman easily to be exploited.

In Japanese society some of Japanese women enter a unique profession named "geisha", a proffession which makes their position and role quite different from woman in common. Geisha is a professional hossteses who entertains guest through various performing art such as dancing traditional dance, singing and playing shamishen in teahouses called an O-chaya, their primary job is to make man feel warm, witty, and virrile(Crishtopher, 1983:103).

In one side geisha profession gives an access for a woman to enter public life and make them independent economically, but on the other side they losing their right in determining their own decision when they should face the process of *Mizuage*, a ceremony that revolve around a girl losing her virginity to the highest bidder (Kyoko,2000: 40). Usually beautiful little girls who are orphans or from poverty stricken families are sold to an O-chaya by relatives as a means of earning money, they were trained to be a geisha (Kyoko,1999:47)

The phenomenon above is marked by feminist as a kind of exploitation or sexual abuse toward woman. They are being forced by the condition in which they cannot avoid to lead a life as a geisha (<http://www.Kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0205/27/srin33.htm-32k-supplemental.result>).

The other fact of geisha life are, she cannot marry if she is to remain in this profession. Even if she has a *danna* (Patron) she is still legally single and if she has a child, it is considered illegitimate (Kyoko,1999:17). A *danna* usually has to be a man with a respected and powerful position to maintain a geisha and does not want his patronage made public. Many of these men do not recognize the children they have with geisha and Japanese wives do not usually feel the affairs between geisha and their husband because the geisha services are professional and would not disrupt their marriage (Kyoko,1999:18).

The life of geisha is a kind of secret but rumors have a tendency to spread like wildfire within the *Hanamachis*. Nevertheless, the privacy of costumer is paramount and there is no gossip outside the community. Geisha who abuses a costumers privacy or discloses any detailes of banquet is not likely to remain a geisha (Kyoko,1999:27).

The unique life of a geisha above has been reflected by Arthur Golden more specifically in his novel entitled *Memoirs of a Geisha*. He wrotes the memoirs of his friends who once ever served her self as a geisha. Arthur Golden was one of the greatest American novelist who has written many literary work such as *Geisha*(1999), *Die Geisha*(2000), and *Memoirs of a geisha* that has been translated into 21 language.

Arthur Golden was born in Chattanooga Tennessee. He earned a degree from Harvard College in art history and his M.A at Columbia University in Japanese history. His experiences make him an expert on Geisha and Japanese culture. Arthur Golden's literary works have famed for the internationally novel readers. Many of his literary works have tried to give a new outlook about geisha in Japanese society, which sometimes erroneously used by Europeans to designate a prostitute (Christopher, 1983:102).

Memoirs of a Geisha is a picture of one Phenomenon in the past at certain time and place when geisha do exist in community called *Hanamachy*. The place where geisha lead peculiar roles and tradition which make woman especially Sayuri have to receive all the consequences that her attitude is being

controlled by the tradition to struggle for a better society. She also loses her right and freedom.

From this point, Sayuri is interesting to be discussed from feminist point of view. She is a woman in the late twentieth century who tries to survive in a very strict society by deciding to be a geisha.

B. Literature Review

Memoirs of a Geisha can be classified into a new novel; this novel was the first debut novel of Arthur Golden. Therefore, the writer only found one study on this novel conducted by Restumardi Oktavia on 2003. Restumardi studied the novel for her research paper entitled “An Analysis of English-Indonesian Translation in Novel *Memoirs of a geisha* By Arthur Golden into “*Memoirs of a Geisha* memoar seorang Geisha” by Listiana Srisanti”. His study focused on the addition and subtraction on the translation of novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*, into *Memoirs of a Geisha* as the source language and *Memoar Seorang Geisha* as the target language.

From the literature review above, the writer assumes that there is no other researcher who analyzes Woman’s position and role in Arthur Golden’s *Memoirs of a Geisha: A Feminist approach*.

C. Problem Statement

The main problem of the study is how woman’s position and role are reflected in Arthur Golden’s *Memoirs of a Geisha*

D. Limitation of the Study

The limitation of the study is on the analysis of woman's position and role in Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha* based on radical feminist perspective.

E. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To analyze the novel in terms of its structural elements.
2. To analyze the novel based on the feminist perspective.

F. Benefits of the Study

The benefits expected from the study are as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefit

This study expected to give contribution to the larger body of knowledge especially on understanding literary studies on Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha* by using feminist approach.

2. Practical Benefit

This study is expected to enrich the researcher's own understanding about the novel and the application of the theory in the analysis.

G. Research Method

The writer analyzes Woman's role and position in Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a geisha*. The study of Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a geisha* in this research paper will cover:

1. Type of the Study.

In analyzing Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a geisha*, the researcher uses qualitative research.

Qualitative research involves the studied use a collection of a variety of empirical materials_ case study; personal experience: introspection; life story: interview, artefact: cultural texts and production; observational, historical, interrelation, and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moment and meanings in individuals live. (Denzin, 2000: 25)

2. Type of Data and Data Sources.

The type of data in this research is text and the writer obtains the data from some books that have relation to the study, those are:

a. Primary Data.

The primary data is taken from the novel *Memoirs of a geisha* that is written by Arthur Golden and published by Division of Random House, Inc. New York. 1997. It includes ideas, attitude, the ways of thinking, and dialogues among the characters in the novel *Memoirs of a geisha* relating to their role.

b. Secondary Data.

Secondary data is data that support the primary data including information, which deals with text and with problem of this research. These data cover author's biography, many ideas from the theory of feminism that will be used in analyzing the novel and among other pieces of relevant information to analysis of this research.

3. Data-collecting Method and Technique.

The data collecting method and technique in this study is library research, the steps are as follows:

- a. Reading the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* many times.
- b. Identifying the problem and to find the data. Therefore, research problem and objective of the study can be drawn.
- c. Collecting some supporting data from other references related to the topic. Therefore, the problems appearing will be able to be answered completely.
- d. Drawing the conclusion of the analysis that has already done in the former chapter.

4. Data- analyzing Technique.

The technique of data analysis in this research paper is descriptive analysis. The analysis uses word, sentences or picture as the data research, and the data reports will contain quotation or documentation.

H. Paper Organization

To give clear understanding of the contents of this study, the writer has appointed the presentation of the study. The presentation of this study consists of six chapters. Chapter I deals with introduction covering the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, research limitation, research objective, research significance, research methodology, and thesis organization. Chapter II deals with underlying theory containing the description of the theory of feminism. Chapter III deals with social

background of American society in the late of twentieth century. Chapter IV deals with structural analysis containing the structural elements of the novel and discussion. Chapter V presents feminist analysis. Chapter VI is conclusion and suggestion.