

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter contains the review of related literature and the theories that are used to support and analyze Sayuri's problems which make her eager to be a successful geisha in *Memoirs of a Geisha*. In this thesis, I use literary theories such as characterization and conflict. In addition, I also use the history of Japanese geisha as the supporting reference to support the analysis. The first theory is the theory of characterization, and second theory is the theory of conflict.

2.1. Characterization

Characterization is the presentation of a character in fiction. According to Thrall (1960), 'Characterization is "the creation of imaginary persons" which exists for the reader as real' (p.79). It means the presentation of a character in the story will show up like a real human being. It enables the readers to know the characters, to understand them, and to learn compassion for them. In some respects, fictional characters are better known than real people, for example Sayuri as a main female character in Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha*. Actually, Sayuri is an imaginary person but the author tries to make Sayuri looks like a real person who really exists in that time.

In addition, the meaning of character itself is a figure in a literary work who is composed of how she or he is described physically; what she or he says, does and thinks; and what others say and do in relation to her or him. Therefore, according to Perrine (1970), "the characters can be observed in situations that are always significant and, which serve to bring forth their character as the ordinary situation of life only, occasionally do. Then, their inner life can be viewed in a way that is impossible in ordinary life" (p.84). So, the relation between characterization and character is: characterization is a process or methods of the writer to make the character or imaginary person seems "real".

There are two types of characters: first, round character. Round characters, are called dynamic characters, are multi dimensional and have many traits. The characters that has more dimensions to his or her personality, complex, solid like people in real life. Therefore, it is difficult to predict how a round character will act, because he or she not always acts the same. They are typically the main

characters in the story. The second type is flat character. Flat characters, are called static characters, are one dimensional. The characters that have only one or two personality traits. So, it is easy to predict how they will act because they will always act the same, for example an honest character, a funny character, etc. They are typically the minor characters in the story.

Characterization is the way how the author makes the readers know and understand about people who are related to the story. Therefore, characterization can be presented through several methods depending on the author's need to bring across his ideas.

There are three fundamental methods of characterization in fiction: "First, the explicit presentation by the author of the character through direct exposition or analysis, either in an introductory block or in more often piece-meal throughout the work, illustrated by action" (Holman and Harmon, 1986, p.8t). It means that the author may describe the character or give his or her comments on the characters in the story, for example what a character is like, or has someone else in the story to tell the readers what a character is like. Therefore, the readers are able to notice the qualities of a character through what the author says about him or her.

Second, "the presentation of the character in action, with little or no explicit comment by the author, in the expectation that the reader will be able to deduce the attributes of the actor from the actions" (p.81). In this case, the method requires the readers' attention to deduce the traits of a character through his or her action. For example when describing Pumpkin character in *Memoirs of a Geisha*. The author rarely tells about Pumpkin character's traits in *Memoirs of a Geisha*, but from her action, the reader will know what kind of person Pumpkin is.

Third, "the representation of a character, without comment on the character by the author, of the impact of actions and emotions upon his or her inner self, with the expectation that the reader will come to a clear understanding of the attributes of the character" (p.81). It means that the character will be represented without any comment from the author, so it is pure from his or her actions, emotions, and relation with other characters in the story. For example when describing Hatsumomo's character in *Memoirs of a Geisha*, through her relationship with

others to whom she always makes troubles. The readers will automatically know that Hatsumomo is included as a troublemaker.

According to Perrine (1970), “The method of direct presentation has the advantages of being clear and economical, but it can never be used alone” (p. 85). It means that the method of direct presentation also needs the support of the method of indirect presentation. In the story, the characters must act because if they do not act, the story become bored and finally become an essay. It will not give the readers a character, but an explanation.

Therefore, characterization is a way to analyze characters, which come from what others think about them, what they look like from their physical appearances, how they speak to others, what they do and do not do in life or society, how they think, feel, and give perceptions about someone or something.

Those three methods are significant for me in analyzing Arthur Golden’ *Memoirs of a Geisha* because it can reveal the attitudes of Sayuri towards the place she lives, her reactions toward the conflicts that come to her. In the direct presentation, the author describes Sayuri’s attitudes toward her surrounding and the society’s traditions. The indirect presentation is used when Arthur Golden describes Sayuri through her actions.

Then, there are three principles that should be observed when analyzing a character: First, ‘a character must be “consistent in their behaviors” unless there is a sufficient reason for the change. From the beginning until the end of the story, a character should have same basic personalities. As the story goes, he or she may face some problems that will change some of his or her ways of living’ (Perrine, 1970, p.85). It means that he or she still has a basic personality, even though he or she has changed to be another person, for example, Sayuri looks stress and unsure when she tries to fulfill her desire to be a successful geisha because she must face too many problems from other geishas who do not like her. Nevertheless, when she knows that Mameha can help her to achieve her eagerness, she changes her mind. She becomes an obedient and strong person. Finally, she becomes a successful geisha. Although, she becomes a successful geisha, she is still nice to all people.

Second, “a character is clearly motivated in whatever he or she does” (p.85). It means that he or she will do everything because he or she is motivated in someone or something, for example, Sayuri knows that by using Mameha’s authority, efforts, power, and position, she can fulfill her eagerness to be a successful geisha. Therefore, Sayuri always follows and obeys Mameha’s command. Third, “a character is acknowledged by what other characters think and say about him or her” (p.85).

The theory of characterization can help me analyzing the problems, which make Sayuri eager to be a successful geisha in geisha’s society.

2.2. Conflict

Besides characterization, I also use conflict. Every story, novel or drama develops around a struggle or conflict. According to Holman (1978), “Conflict is an essential element since it is the back bone of a story. It is conflict that provides us with pattern and direction and gives us the sense of a story going somewhere” (p.118). It means that conflict is an important part in controlling a story, because it can give the readers good directions about the story.

In addition, “A fiction deals with human experience in daily life. It is a made up story which is mostly about human life and its affair. It also tells about the process of change in life, about conflicts in many situations of fictional life, and how the characters are confronted with various conflicts and struggles with what to decide and what to choose” (Little, 1969, p.85).

According to Holman (1978), in his theory of conflict, ‘Conflict is “a struggle which grows out of the interplay of the opposition of persons or forces in a plot”. Then, the word ‘conflict’ is not only the struggle of a protagonist against someone or something, but also the existence of some motivation for the conflict or some goals to be achieved by it.’(pp.118-119). It means that if someone gets involved in a conflict against someone or something, it is sure that he or she has a motivation in it, for example, the main female character of the story gets involved in a conflict against the other characters. It shows that she has motivation in it. The motivation can be getting a freedom or gaining a better life.

In addition, conflict also means “the clash of actions, ideas, desire, or Wills” (Perrine, 1970, p.59). As Robert Penn Warren, the contemporary American poet, novelist, and critic said “No conflict, no story” (Muller and William, 1985, p.46). It means that the story cannot be made up without any conflict inside. Therefore, conflict is an important part in a fiction or story because conflict can make the story alive or interesting and exciting for the readers.

In addition, “Conflict is the opposition of two people” (Robert and Jacobs, 1986, p.107). They might fight, argue, against each other, and carry on their opposition. The existence of the difficulty choice within an individual’s mind may also be presented as conflict, for example Sayuri must face many problems with Hatsumomo who does not like Sayuri’s efforts in order to fulfill her eagerness to be a successful geisha in geisha’s society.

There are two kinds of conflicts: external conflict and internal conflict. According to Perrine (1970), the external conflicts are classified into three categories: “First, the external conflict where the main character struggles against another character. The main character and other characters appear with their own images and attitudes, which may lead them into a conflict” (p.59). It represents man-against-man or protagonist versus antagonist, for example, the competition to get the position like what has happened between Sayuri and Hatsumomo.

Second, “the conflict of a character against nature or environment. Here, the main character may be in conflict with some external forces such as nature or even fate” (p.59). It represents man versus forces of nature such as flooding, storm, cold weather and animal, for example a struggle of a character against his or her fate about something or a struggle of a character against tiger in a jungle and so on.

Third, “a conflict of a character against society. It is a struggle between human and social values in his or her society. In this kind of conflict, the character experiences conflict with the moral principles of society such as traditions, customs, laws moral codes and accepted beliefs” (p.59), for example Sayuri cannot reach her true love when she is still a dependent geisha because according to the geisha’s tradition there is no ‘true love’ in their principles. Therefore, if she wants to reach her lover, she must against the geisha’s tradition.

Through these three categories of external conflict, I use the man-against-man external conflict to analyze Sayuri's problems related to the opposition between Sayuri and Hatsumomo. Then, I use a conflict of a character against society to analyze Sayuri's problems related to geisha's tradition. With these two categories of external conflicts, I want to show Sayuri's problems, which eventually help me discover her eagerness to be a successful geisha in geisha's society.

“Internal conflict is a conflict when a person struggles against some elements which are in his or her own personality” (Brooks, 1967, p.57). It means, the character is in an internal conflict when it occurs in him or herself. In addition, internal conflict also means a struggle between desires within a person or struggle of a character against him or herself, his or her conscience, his or her guilt or simply to decide what he or she is going to do. In short, the opponent is him or herself.

In daily life, a person is confronted with many problems. In process of gaining and maintaining his or her goal, he or she often involves in his or her conflict. In this kind of conflict, he himself or she herself is facing a kind of complicated situation in which he or she has to choose the best solution according to his or her own consideration. Internal conflict tends to appear more frequently in determining what is good and bad in real life. In my analysis, I use internal conflict to analyze Sayuri's inner conflict when she has to choose or do something.

On this part, I also use the history of Japanese geisha in order to give a background support and a description that is related to Sayuri's problems which make her eager to be a successful geisha in geisha's society.

2.2.1. The History of Japanese Geisha

Past. Since the earliest history of Japan, “geisha-type” women are existed. According to Naomi Graham-Diaz, the author of *History of the Geisha* in immortal geisha.com, “Two notable predecessors to geisha were the *Saburuko*, who came onto the scene at the end of the seventh century, and the *Shirabyoshi*, who emerged during the late Heian-early Kamakura period (1185-1333AD)” (http://www.immortalgeisha.com/ig/history_01.cfm)

“*Saburuko*, ones who serve, were the result of an increasing social displacement towards the end of the seventh century. Many women found themselves had becoming wanderers, who in order to survive, had to resort to trading their sexual favors. Most of them were from the lower class, there were among them women who were quite educated and talented. These particular *Saburukos*, who were talented dancers and singers often found themselves invited to entertain at aristocratic gatherings”

(http://www.immortalgeisha.com/ig/history_01.cfm).

“*Shirabyoshi*, who adopted their name from the dance that they performed, appeared at a time when the social structure in Japan was starting to break down. The changing fortunes of many aristocratic families had resulted in the daughters of these families becoming *Shirabyoshi* in order to survive. These women, who were often highly educated, soon became valued for their dancing and poetic talent. They were supported by many upper class families including the famous aristocratic families of the Fujiwara and Taira. The *Shirabyoshis* were recognizable from the white Shinto-style outfits that they would wear, the playing of the drum and fife, and their dancing abilities. They would also recite ballads that were based on Buddhist-style introduced from China. The most famous of the *Shirabyoshi*, who would be remembered many centuries down the track, were *Shizuka*, the concubine of *Minamoto no Yoshitsune* (1159-1189) and *Kamagiku*, the favorite concubine of the retired Emperor, *Gotoba* (1189-1239)”

(http://www.immortalgeisha.com/ig/history_01.cfm)

In 1589, Hara Saburozaemon had created the first walled-in pleasure quarter in the area of *Nijo Yanagimachi* in Kyoto, Japan. In 1602, the quarter relocated to *Rokujo Misujimachi* and then in 1640-1641, the quarters were eventually relocated to the suburb of *Suzakuno* and started to become known as the “*Shimabara of Kyoto*”. According to Naomi Graham-Diaz, “*Shimabara of Kyoto* became the second most famous of the pleasure quarters in Japan, and the original design of the quarters came to be used as a basis for *Yoshiwara*”

(http://www.immortalgeisha.com/ig/history_01.cfm).

At first, the *Yoshiwara* looked to *Simabara of Kyoto* for influence in customs, manners and cultural ways. However, in later years, this place became

the prostitution place. It happened because many daughters and young wives of the high ranking samurai found themselves displaced within society, so, in order to be able to make a living for themselves, they turned to prostitution.

In her article, *History of the Geisha*, Naomi Graham-Diaz found, “There were many different classes of courtesans within the pleasure quarters, but the main classes existing at *Shimabara* at the beginning were *Tayuu* and *Hashi-joro*. *Tayuu* (entertainers in the Shimabara district of Kyoto; they are similar to *Oiran* in Tokyo), was the highest class that a courtesan could ever achieve. Then in second place was the *Koshi-joro*. *Tsubone-joro* was the next class down, but with the onset of the *Umecha-joro* class around the *Genroku* era, their popularity was lowered. The next class was the *Kirimise-joro* who offered their service for a very modest sum and below them was the *Sancha-joro*. The *Sancha-joro* class consisted of bath house’s women who had been operating illegally. The infamous *Katsuyama*, whom the *Katsuyama-mage* or more frequently referred to as ‘*marumage*’, hairstyle originated from arose from this very class of illegal prostitutes to become an extremely popular *Tayuu*. Last but not least was the lowest of all classes, the *Hashi-joro*” (http://www.immortalgeisha.com/ig/history_01.cfm).

Later in the following years, the popularity of *Tayuu* had turned down and was changed by the *Sancha-joro*. In 1700's, *Sancha-joro* started to become popular and were split into two new groups: the *Chusan* and the *Tsukemawashi*. At the same time, the previously known class of *Tsubone-joro* had now become one of the lowest classes of prostitutes. These changes happened in the second half of the eighteenth century along with the general decline of the skill of courtesans and the standards, which were once held so high, started to slowly be lowered.

It provided the perfect conditions for a completely new and different type of entertainer class to arise from within the Floating World. In 1750-1751, the beginnings of the new class emerged from Kyoto and Osaka, called ‘*geiko*’. According to the article of the *History of the Geisha* by Naomi Graham-Diaz, “*Geiko* originally were men, derived from the previously known group of *Taikomochi*. These men had been around entertaining in various ways since the

Kwambun era (1661-1672), but had been solely male until the first female geisha, Kikuya from *Fukagawa*, appeared”

(http://www.immortalgeisha.com/ig/history_01.cfm). The development of female geisha was closely connected to the introduction of the *Shamisen* (three stringed musical instruments studied and played by the *geiko* and the geisha) and the *odoriko* (*odori-dance* and ko-child).

“Around the 1680’s, young teenage dancers, whose parents sent them to dance teachers for the purpose of having them trained so that they could hire them out, were becoming quite popular in the households of the Daimyo and upper class samurai. Originally, these girls were put out hire without the offering of sexual acts, but over the years, with many parents starting to exploit their daughters, many of the *odoriko* had turned to prostitution. In 1743, a group of Edo *odoriko* were arrested along with other illegal prostitutes and sent to work in the *Yoshiwara*. In 1753, another group of around 104 *odoriko* from *Fukagawa* sent off to pleasure quarters to work as well. These women, although still selling themselves in prostitution, started to call themselves ‘*Geiko*’. Then, in 1779, female geisha had become so popular”

(http://www.immortalgeisha.com/ig/history_01.cfm).

In addition, by the following years, girls were sold to a geisha’s house or *Okiya* by their family to get money, and to give a better education for their daughters. Then, the choice to become a geisha was less because of economic reasons, and a career choice like others. The families usually sold beautiful little girls who were orphaned or from poverty stricken families to an *Okiya*. Then, *Okiya* would invest a lot of money to train these girls and dress them in bright-colored kimonos.

Present. However, nowadays the word geisha has a different meaning. The other meaning of a geisha is an “artist” in Japanese. Geishas are professional female entertainers who entertain guests through various performing arts in teahouses called *O-chaya*. They are trained in a number of traditional skills such as Japanese ancient dance, singing, playing instruments such as *Shamisen*, flower arrangement, wearing kimono, tea ceremony, calligraphy, conversation, alcohol serving manners and more. According to Kyoko Aihara (1999), in her book *The*

World of the Geisha, “girls who wish to become a geisha, have to go through a rigid apprenticeship during which they learn various traditional arts such as playing instruments, singing, dancing, conversation and other social skills in *hanamachi* -the licensed areas of Japanese cities in which the geisha live and entertain in Kyoto” (p.10).

In her book, *The World of the Geisha*, Kyoko Aihara said, “Kyoto has six *hanamachis*: *Gion-Kobu*, *Gion-Higashi*, *Ponto-cho*, *Kamishichiken*, *Miyagawa-cho* and *Shimabara*” (p.12). The meaning of *Gion* is a place for geisha to entertain their customers like singing, dancing, serving *sake* and so on. In addition, to be successful, a geisha must demonstrate beauty, grace, artistic talent, charm, impeccable etiquette, and refinement.

Actually, geisha’s community not only in Kyoto but also in Tokyo. But in modern day, there is little information about modern Tokyo geisha and *hangyoku* (han- half, *gyoku*- the amount charged for a full fledged geisha) and their customs and traditions. The geisha districts in Tokyo have a rough equivalent to *maiko* called *Hangyoku*. They originally are young girls (at the age of 9 to 10) who will join the Tokyo *hanamachi* and train in the various arts. A few years later, they would start to entertain at parties. In addition, Tokyo geishas are less elaborate than geishas in Kyoto, because they do not wear the long trailing kimono or obi but the distinct red collar.

The Kyoto geishas have two levels such as *maiko* and *geiko*. *Maiko* means a woman of dancing, *geiko* means a woman of art. Then, the word ‘*maiko*’ refers to freshman or junior and the word ‘*geiko*’ refers to senior. For most people, *maiko* and *geiko* are called in one name, geisha. However, it is not easy for women to be a geisha because they must follow all of the rules. Not only trained in traditional skill but they must also follow their *Okiya*’s rules.

To become a successful geisha in society, a geisha must become a daughter of the owner of *Okiya* or accepted by an *Okiya*. Besides that, to be a successful geisha, the young *maiko* must be liked and valued by the *onesans*- the *geikos* of the house who takes the role of elder sisters and the *okasan*- managers of the teahouses who also acts as mother figures within the *hanamachis* hierarchy or the owner of *Okiya*. If a geisha is liked, they (*onesans* and *okasan*) are going to

take a good care of her, advising her and helping her with any problems that may arise, and taking her to their *ozashikis*- refer to either a banquet in an *Ochaya*, or traditionally styled banqueting room in which these are held, and other engagements to introduce her to their customers.

Kyoko Aihara (1999) said, “After the new geisha starts the debut in entertainment, it will come the time for her to get a *danna*. A *danna* (patron) usually has to be a man with a respected and powerful position to maintain a geisha and does not want his patronage made public” (p.17). In this case, there would be two *danna*; first, *danna* of *mizuage* (the occasion on which a geisha loses her virginity); and *danna* of geisha’s life, means a man who have a responsibility to pay all debts owed by a geisha. “*Danna* have a responsibility to pay the geisha a monthly allowance which usually covers the geisha's rent and living expense, such as cosmetics, lessons, meals, accessories, uniforms, etc; he may also buy her kimonos and obis” (pp.51-52).

In geisha’s rule, geisha cannot marry or fall in love with someone if she is still in this profession. But if she wants to marry or to stay with her lover, she should be a successful geisha and repay the *okiya*. Based on Kyoko Aihara’s book, *The World of the Geisha*, “the geisha term of service at the *okiya* is five to six years, including her time as a maid and a *maiko*. So, during this period she lives and works there to repay the *okiya*’s expenditure on her behalf. If a geisha has completed the service and paid all the debts to *okiya*, she can leave and become an independent geisha. After a geisha becomes independent, she takes the responsibility for her own life and starts to work as a freelance professional.” (pp.30- 47).

By giving this explanation about the history of Japanese geisha, I try to show that there are many reasons that can make someone to be a geisha such as, money, education, career, etc. In addition, I also try to show the way a new geisha gains better life and become a famous or successful geisha. With this reference, I want to show the problems, which make Sayuri has an eagerness to be a successful geisha.

In analyzing this thesis, I use characterization, conflict, and the history of Japanese geisha. In order to explain Sayuri’s character traits or personality that is

related to Sayuri's problems which make her eager to be a successful geisha, I use all the theories together, such as characterization, and conflict. Besides, I also use the history of Japanese geisha as reference in analyzing Sayuri's problems which make her eager to be a successful geisha in geisha's society.