CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

The progress of humanity and the evolution of societies have been documented through oral traditions, cave paintings, and textbooks. Literature is one of those mirrors for it reflects not only the author's thoughts, but also the society in which the author lives.

Historically, women have been treated as the second-class citizens, denied their equal rights, and socialized to overvalue their perceptions of "superior" men. Likewise, they have been enmeshed in male-dominated social systems that constantly make them feel dependent and inadequate.

The place of a woman in society depends in which culture and society she belongs to. The place of women in Japanese society provides an interesting blend of illusion and myth. There are two distinct Japanese societies, public and private. The popular Western image of the subservient Japanese woman is real; it is however, only an image. In their private family role, women quite often dominate the male members of the household. Judged by Western standards, the women of Japan are unusually dedicated to their families. The current position of women in Japanese society can be attributed to the vestiges of two old philosophies Confucianism and Samurai based feudalism. These influences are still strong, however in spite of these influences the public role of women has changed markedly since the beginning of World War II (http://www2.gol.com). Before the

World War II, the family relation was arranged by strict hierarchy system and the parents were extremely powerful. The father demanded respect from his children and so the children would fulfill it. A married woman was expected to obey and faithfully toward her husband and so the parents-in-law. According to Edwin O. Reischauer, traditional gender roles in Japan are characterized by a strong sense of patriarchy in society, which account for the bifurcation of the productive and reproductive spheres, with a distinct separation of gender roles. In the family, this refers to the idea of the man as the primary breadwinner of the family, and the woman as the primary caregiver in the family. Gender roles in the family bear a close relationship to the situation in the workforce, where there is a strong male dominance in the company hierarchy. Resultantly, males possess increased career opportunities, unlike females, who are marginalized in the workforce and are considered to be temporary labor, expected to resign upon marriage or childbirth. As can be seen, there is an intimate family-work relationship in Japanese society and this hinges on the traditional gender roles within society. The traditional roles of women underscore the deeply-rooted nature of inequality in the gender roles and relationships in Japan (1977: 176). However, the democratization after the World War II, had changed all aspect of Japan's family life. The legal position of women was redefined by the occupation authorities, who included an equal rights clause in the 1947 Constitution and the revised Civil Code of 1948. The law enables women to have the same position with men in all aspect. So, the old patriarchy system was eliminated and so in today's Japan, such traditional attitudes are changing, as illustrated by the emergence of a class of young,

educated and professional women, who prefer to remain single, in order to preserve their freedom.

The rise of feminism outside and inside Japan, according to Yoshio Sugimoto in *An Introduction To Japanese Society*, however, has sensitized observers to gender stratification in Japanese society and directed their attention to a wide range of questions such as in what ways are Japanese women subjected to a Japan's specific system of gender control and how the women are disadvantaged in the Japanese family structure (2001: 136). The condition became more tragic since after the World War II, the Japanese women were given rights of equality but still they experienced disadvantages from the family system.

After the Banquet by Yukio Mishima is one of the novels that tells about a woman who tries to reach her successful marriage life and at the same time be independent under the patriarchy system. It tells how the woman character has to struggle in her life in order to fulfill her needs as part of the Japan's patriarchal system and as a wife and an independent woman. As a woman, Kazu was a successful restaurant owner. She was married to an aristocrat and retired politician age sixty years old, Yuken Noguchi. Kazu was worried about her life as a single woman for nobody would mourn her when she died. Therefore, she had to find someone to depend on, have a family and lead a normal life. The only way to reach the purposes was to go through with the formalities of love. As a politician, Noguchi was quite different from the other fellow politicians. He had honesty and vitality. However, the relationship is doomed because of a big difference. Kazu has to work very hard to gain success in life, even if it meant acting in an immoral

way. Her husband, on the other hand, has been born into an easier life; therefore respect and integrity are more important to him than "commercial" success. These all comes to a conclusion when Kazu tries to revive her husband's political career, using methods he could not approve of. Being determined for her own selfishness resurrects her husband's political career; she secretly funds his idealistic political campaign. When he finds this out, his high and unyielding moral sensibilities are offended. Kazu is forced to choose between his narrow code of conduct and the independence and way of life she has come to cherish.

This novel has brought a wide-range of questions of how the Japanese women survive as they become house wives and at the same time as an independent woman represented by becoming a career woman. These all come to the questions of how the Japanese patriarchy, family system and gender roles in Japan are subjected to the life of Japanese women.

After the Banquet by Yukio Mishima was regarded as being very controversial because of the light Mishima cast on Japanese political, social and sexual life when it was first published in 1960. As well as exploring the erotic and psychological issues Mishima has made his own, *After the Banquet* gives the reader keen insights into Mishima's political and social beliefs and hopes for Japan.

The study will apply the psychological approach which is emphasized on the whole aspects of the literary works, either intrinsic or extrinsic. The decision of making the thesis as a psychological study since according to Wellek and

Warren in *Theory of Literature*, the elements of the study of the psychological types and laws present within *After the Banquet*.

B. Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study above it is interesting for the writer to analyze *After the Banquet*. The problems to be analyzed are formulated into the following question:

1. How does Kazu attempt in becoming a wife and at the same time a career woman?

C. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To reveal Kazu's attempt in becoming a wife and at the same time as a career woman by describing:

a. How does she face the obstacles in her life

b. How far does she succeed in gaining her quality of life

D. Significance of the Study

By analyzing Yukio Mishima's *After the Banquet*, hopefully we can get something valuable in understanding Japanese literary works. The writer would like to know about certain situation in the story, the conflicts which appear, the struggle, and the ways the main character resolved the problem. Besides, we may be able to deepen our understanding of life and its aspect for literary works as the

imitation of real life. Moreover, the study would also be meaningful in order to enrich our knowledge about the changing role of Japanese woman. Hopefully, the study may reveal how the Japanese women are subjected to a Japan-specific system of gender control and how the women are disadvantaged in the Japanese family structure.

E. Scope and Limitation

In order to keep the study remain in the expected field, the limitation of the analysis is required, thus the study would be concentrated on the aspect related to the main study as stated in the objectives of the study and the aspects that support the analysis.

The limitation of this thesis is categorized into two points which are intrinsic and extrinsic aspect. Concerning the intrinsic point, the study is expected to contribute valuable insight toward character, plot and setting analysis. Whereas for the extrinsic point, some values in psychological studies are likely to be worthwhile particularly in having broader point of how the Japanese women are subjected to a Japan-specific system of gender control and how the women are disadvantaged in the Japanese family structure.

The main analysis would be on the main character, Kazu, as the object of the study. The writer wishes to know the effect of the main character's family system and patriarchal systems to Kazu's process of thinking, acting and making decisions.

F. Theoretical Background

Since the study perceives the problems from the psychological point of view, hence the use of the psychological approach becomes the most appropriate one. The psychological approach emphasized on the whole aspects of the literary works, either intrinsic or extrinsic. The intrinsic approach will help to analyze the character, plot and setting.

The theory that will be used to analyze the work from the extrinsic approach is Karen Horney's Sociocultural theory of Personality. The theory serves as the supporting tool in the analysis and focuses the discussion on the intended scope. Since the major attention of this thesis is a female character, who is a wife and career woman, Karen Horney's feminine psychology is used to analyze the character's actions dealing with the demand from her society between the modern Japanese woman and the traditional role of the Japanese wife.

G. Method of the Study

In order to obtain an accurate analysis on the work, reliable and accurate information is needed. Hence, there are some sources that will set up the foundation of the analysis. The library research is considered to be a reliable method since many of its sources are accomplished through elaborate studies, such as compilation of literary theories or criticism and scientific researches. The information concerning Yukio Mishima and his works are supplied from some sites in the internet as well as other related written materials.

In terms of the method of making the analysis, the descriptive analysis will be applied in the effort of working out the statements of the problems.

H. Definition of Key Terms

Family grave : The place where dead person buried in accordance in one family.

Ie : Represents a quasi-kinship unit with a patriarchal head and members tied to him through real or symbolic blood relationship.

Koseki system : The cornerstone of the scheme, representing the usually veiled ura aspect of Japanese family structure. The basic unit of koseki is not an individual but a household. The records of each individual's gender, birthplace, date of birth, parent' names, position among siblings, marriage, and divorce are kept in detail in each household koseki and filed in the local municipal office.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK