

Chapter I

Introduction

A. Background of the Study

Heian age in Japan began in 794 until 1185 A.D. This age is known as Japan's golden age of high aesthetic, sexual politics, and literary brilliance (Dalby 1). In other words, the development on the literary works came to the point of culmination in this age. Many literary works were published, and the most famous one is *The Tale of Genji*, which was written by Lady Murasaki Shikibu. Beside *The Tale of Genji*, other literary works that were also well known are *Taketori Monogatari* and *Utsuho Monogatari*. These literary works were influenced by Chinese culture, thus only people from the high class were able to read and enjoy them, especially people belonging to the court member.

Lady Murasaki Shikibu was a teacher in the court, who taught the Tei's consort. She was the daughter of Fujiwara Tametoki, a minor branch of the powerful family and a scholar of Chinese, assigned to the Board of Rites (Hines 1). Her background as a noble made her master Chinese language and literature well. Her father let Murasaki and his brother had their lessons in a Chinese school during their childhood. After she grew up, her father taught her at home – at that time, it was almost impossible to send a girl into a public school – and made her master the Chinese language and literary far ahead than any other girls. She was famous as a poetess in the court. However, she was not popular, since the court members thought she was too severe and spiteful; and she was known as an

unsociable court lady. She gained her real popularity after she wrote *The Tale of Genji*, a novel that was a mixture of truth and fiction.

Lady Murasaki's most popular literary work is *The Tale of Genji*. This literary work interests the writer of the thesis because the story describes the life of the Japanese court in the Heian age. *The Tale of Genji*, which consists of 54 "Jo" or chapters, describes the court members' life, the spread of Buddhism and the influence of the Chinese culture in Japanese literary works during the Heian age. It took about twenty years for Lady Murasaki to write this novel, and got many criticisms from the court members because of its content, since it reveals the scandal of the court members. Each chapter in this novel is categorized as an independent chapter, which is limited into a loosely entire structured. As a whole, this novel is divided into two parts, three transitional sections, and the *Ten Uji* chapter. The first part consists of 33 chapters, which describes Genji's adventure and events of his early life. The second part consists of eight chapters (chapter 34 – 41), which describes Genji's successfulness as a general and the revealing of the dark side of his character. The three transitional sections describe the death of Genji and the story of Tô no Chûjô's son. The last section that is called ten Uji chapters describes Genji's descendents who take over the story after Genji's death.

The idea of *The Tale of Genji* occurred when Lady Murasaki Shikibu became the teacher of the Tei's consort, Empress Akiko. She taught her Chinese language and literature. Since she became a teacher in the court, she naturally lived in a mansion that was placed in the court neighborhood. Her interaction with the

Japanese court members gave her the idea to write her story, *The Tale of Genji*. This tale is based on the life of Japanese court members, the intrigue in the court and the spread of Buddhism in Japan during the Heian Age. This tale also describes the hidden hatred between the Tei's consort and his ladies, the competition between the crown prince and the son of a favorite lady to gain the public attention, and the competition between the ladies.

In this thesis, the writer will only analyze the first part of the novel, which consists of 33 chapters. This part is interesting because we can find the early life of Hikaru Genji as the son of the Tei's favorite lady (also called as the Tei's minor consort). We can also find his activities as a great general of the imperial and the court member, and his personal life including his political marriage. As a matter of fact, according to the rules, as a son of a minor consort, he cannot inherit the crown from his father even though he is capable to. Here, Genji has to struggle to proof his existence in the court during his childhood, since he always compared with the crown prince in everything. Later, as a great general in the court, Hikaru Genji becomes the ruler of the court, who is obeyed by most of the court members (except the Tei). By taking Part I of *The Tale of Genji*, the writer believes it can give a vast picture of the sociocultural condition of Japanese court members in the Heian Age.

The most conspicuous thing in this novel that interests the writer to analyze is Hikaru Genji's will to power related to his affairs that reflects the sociocultural life of the Japanese court members in the Heian Age. As a woman's work, Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji* is a masterpiece, not only for Japanese literary

work, but also for its being recognized as one of the world greatest novels. On the other hand, this novel also gets many criticisms especially from the Japanese court members because the evidence and some names in this novel are based on the reality and easy to recognize.

B. Statement of the Problem

In analyzing the life of the main character, Hikaru Genji, in *The Tale of Genji*, the writer will propose the following problems:

1. How did Genji's struggle in gaining his power inside and outside the court?
2. What were Genji's main reasons of having many affairs during his life?

C. Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, this study intends to:

1. To give a further analysis of Genji's struggle in gaining his power inside and outside the court.
2. To analyze Genji's main reasons of having many affairs during his life.

D. Significance of the Study

This study is written to give a deeper knowledge about the condition of the Japanese court in the Heian age and the background of the main character.

The result of the analysis is dedicated to enrich our knowledge about Japanese literary works, especially of Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji* related to Japanese culture in the Heian age.

E. Scope and Limitation

To analyze this literary work, the writer will only attempt to reveal the sociocultural condition in Japanese court during the Heian age that influence Genji's will to power related to his affairs through the plot, character, and setting. Since it only emphasizes on the sociocultural condition of the Japanese court during the Heian age, hence the sociocultural approach will be used.

F. Theoretical Framework

This analysis is intended to analyze the sociocultural condition of Japanese court in the Heian age, which influences Genji's will to power that reflect the life of the Japanese court members. Since it concerns with the intrinsic elements of a novel, the intrinsic approach will be used. The intrinsic approach will cover setting, character, and plot of the story in order to get a brief description of Genji's purposes of having many affairs during his life.

To support this, the writer will use the sociocultural approach since the analysis has a relationship with the Japanese court. This approach will be strengthened by Michel Foucault's theory about *Sexuality and Power*. These viewpoints are used to clarify the condition in Japanese court that influences the

central character's life. These viewpoints are used to clarify the condition in Japanese court that influences the central character's life.

G. Method of the Study

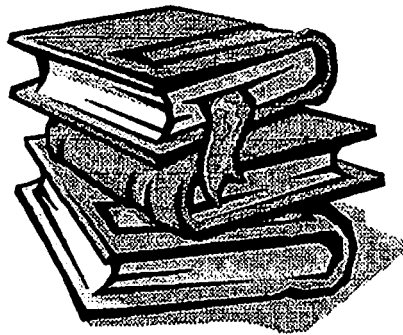
To analyze this literary work, the writer applies the library research to support the analysis of the problem. What is meant by the library research is a process to find information in the library to help the writer to direct her research. Thus, to fulfill the need of the information, she collects the information from books, encyclopedias, and other printed materials related to the work of Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji*. The writer also tries to find information related to the theories and approaches that will be used in the analysis. However, the main source used for the study is the work itself – in this case is Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji* – and the other sources are used to support the analysis. Furthermore, the quotations are provided to confirm and support the analysis of the literary work.

In order to get a further explanation about Hikaru Genji's struggled to gain his power, the writer of the thesis would like to use descriptive analytic method. According to The American College Dictionary, a descriptive analytic method is, "an analysis which classifies and describes the material in a particular way (usually characterized by description)." By using this method, hopefully, the reader can find out and figure out about Hikaru Genji's struggle to gain his power and his reasons of having many affairs during his life.

H. Definition of Key Term

In this analysis, the important terms, which are to be noted, will be given as follows:

1. **Tenno or Tei** : emperor; the head of the court; a ruler of an empire
2. **Consort** : the king's wife; the queen of an imperial
3. **Court** : residence of a sovereign, his family and officials, councilors, etc.
4. **Ladies** : mistress, woman having regular sexual intercourse with one man to whom she is not married
5. **Affair** : a sexual relationship between two people not married to each other, especially one that lasts for sometime
6. **Power** : right, control, authority; person or organization having great authority or influence
7. **Will to Power** : mental power by which a person can direct his thought and actions, and influence those of others; control over oneself, one's impulse
8. **General** : the highest position in a military corps



CHAPTER II