

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The life of Japanese court members in the Heian era was strictly closed. Lady Murasaki's Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji* can help us to understand more about that age. This novel told about the life of Hikaru Genji. As a son of Kiritsubo Tei from one of his hidden flower, Genji cannot be a Tei to replace his father's position even though he is capable of doing that. During his life, Genji has some affairs with several women in accordance with his status as a great general of the imperial and court member. His affairs are based on several things, the main reason is his will to power. The high frequency of interaction between Hikaru Genji and the women make him be involved in some affairs. He had a son from Fujitsubo, and a daughter from the Akashi lady. These affairs bring some advantages for both sides, Genji and his ladies. These related to Genji's position as a court member and a general of the imperial.

Meanwhile, Genji's activities as a court member enable him to make some affairs with the ladies, mostly from the court society. Similar to other aristocrats, he has some ladies during his life. Thus, it has been a part of his life. In the military corps, Genji also has some affairs with the ladies outside the court. His intense interaction with some of these ladies (Murasaki, the Akashi lady, Akikonomu, and the Orange Blossom) required him to build a

mansion for them. The mansion is divided into four sections, one section for each lady.

Genji's affairs with his ladies are related with his position in the court. The ladies would like to become his ladies because they know that he is a court member. Another reason is because he is a general of the imperial, a very prestigious position during the Heian Age. However, the main reasons of the ladies are to raise their social rank in the society and secure their position in the court. Meanwhile, Genji uses this affairs as a tool to gain more power in the court and outside the court; and to broaden his influence on public.

Hikaru Genji's will to power in *The Tale of Genji* can be represented as a reflection of the Japanese court members' life during the Heian Age. The writer considers this novel as a picture of the sociocultural life of Japanese court members in the Heian age. We can find the relationship of human's will to power related to their sexual activities.

## Synopsis

The story begins with Genji's childhood – a son of the Tei from his favorite hidden flower -. His mother died not long after Genji was born because of the jealousy of the other hidden flowers and the Empress, The Kokiden Lady. To replace his mother's position, the Tei asks Fujitsubo, his youngest hidden flower, to raise Genji. Genji's talent and his intelligent makes him become the shining star in the court, his popularity even beat the crown prince's. At the age of 12, he marries Aoi, a daughter of the Minister of the Left. This marriage is based on political goals rather than love. Aoi is older than Genji, and although this marriage is politically advantages advantageous for Genji, she does not interest him. On the other hand, Genji has a good relationship with To no Chujo, Aoi's brother. Because they have the same vision about many things, Genji often spends his leisure time with To no Chujo to discuss something, including women's topic.

Genji has his first affair with Utsusemi, a wife of the Governor of Kii. In this affair, he hides his real identity from her to avoid the rumor and the lady's fear. This affair ends when Genji has to go back to the court. This affair is continued by other affairs, including affairs with the Rokujo lady (the widow of his uncle) and an affair with his stepmother, Fujitsubo. On the other hand, his affair with Fujitsubo makes her pregnant. This pregnancy fears Fujitsubo and she dares not to meet Genji anymore. When the baby was born, the world knows him as the Tei's son. Genji's full schedule as a military legionnaire costs his health. He fells ill and his condition make the Tei asks him to go to Mount Hiei, where a

monk who can cure him lives. This order forces Genji to leave the court and takes the treatment for several months. In this place, he meets Murasaki (later known as his favorite hidden flower) who is still 10 years old. Attracted by her beauty, he wants to take Murasaki to the court and shape her into a perfect woman. Even though Murasaki's family refuses his intention, Genji still insists to do it. Therefore, when he goes back to the court, he brings Murasaki with him. Since that day, she becomes one of the court members.

At the first time, the relation between Murasaki and Genji is like a father – daughter relationship, especially after she has lost her father since she was a very young girl. Meanwhile, the competition between Genji's wife (Aoi) and his ladies continuous that make one of his ladies sends her wandering spirit to disturb Aoi. Being frightened by this disturbance, Aoi's health becomes weakened. Her condition becomes worse after she bears Genji's son, Yugiri. Not long after Yugiri's birth, Aoi dies. The death of Aoi changes the relationship between Genji and Murasaki into a sexual one.

The old Tei (Genji's father) dies, and his crown is inherited by the crown prince, Suzaku Emperor (Genji half-brother). The change of the authority in the court makes Genji feel that he is out of favor of the court. Thus, he decides to leave the court for self-imposed exile to Suma. Here, he stays for two years to purify him from his worldly desire and court life. However, he still writes to his entire ladies, although Murasaki is the one he misses most. He leaves Suma after he dreams about his father who orders him to leave the place. In his departure, his boat sunk in the sea near the Akashi Island, and a retired Akashi governor helps



him. To show his thanks, he visits the governor's house, where he has a liaison with the governor's daughter (The Akashi lady). This liaison ends when the Suzaku Emperor instructs him to go back to Miyako. Genji uses this moment to reunite with Murasaki. In the court, the Suzaku Emperor decides to raise Fujitsubo's (and Genji's) son, Reizei, after Fujitsubo decides to be a nun. Suzaku sets Reizei to be the next Tei while he decides to retire.

On the other hand, Genji's career becomes better and he reaches higher official posts. His happiness becomes greater after he knows that the Akashi lady bears a daughter from him. He wants to bring them into the court. Murasaki becomes jealous of the new situation because she thinks that the birth of the baby will make the Akashi lady replace her position as Genji's favorite hidden flower. Her jealousy is caused by her incapability to give Genji a son or daughter. To reduce her jealousy, Genji asks the Akashi lady to give her daughter to Murasaki. Realizing the Akashi lady's sacrifice, Murasaki's jealousy softens and they become friends.

Meanwhile, Fujitsubo dies at the age of 37, an age which is well known as a dangerous age. The death of Fujitsubo also reveals the big secret of the Reizei Emperor's birth, a secret that he knows from Fujitsubo's servant. Realizing that he is Genji's son despite the old Tei's way of treating Genji, he promotes Genji to a higher rank as a chancellor in the court. To accommodate his favorite ladies, Genji builds the Rokujo mansion; each lady has her own pavilion named based on the season (spring, summer, autumn, and winter). Knowing that his son, Yugiri, is maturing, Genji wants to engage him to To no Chujo's daughter, Kumoinikari.

Unfortunately, To no Chujo refuses this engagement because he thinks that Genji is his most rival and he wants to send his daughter to the court for imperial service.

To strengthen her position in the court, Murasaki hold a spring party in her garden for Empress Akikonomu. By having this party, she wants to close her relationship with the Empress and tries to make her existence accepted in the court (for this long, the court does not admit her as Genji's legal consort. Thus, the court members never accept her fully). In this party, Genji falls in love with Tamakazura (one of To no Chujo's daughter). He shows his affection by discussing histories, illustrating romances stories, and giving her a music lesson. Their intimate relationship disturbed Yugiri who also is attracted to her. At last, Tamakazura marries Hige-kuro (also known as "Black beard") who does not belong as a court member to remove herself from the world of intrigue where Genji has kept her for this long. Her marriage ends her affairs with Genji and thus begins her life as a common people.

After Genji's daughter from the Akashi lady grew up, he prepares to send her to the imperial service. In the court, she has a brilliant court debutance. On the other hand, To no Chujo misses the opportunity to send her his daughter to the court, as was his early intention. He even regrets his decision for not giving his daughter to Genji's son. In the end of Part I, Genji and To no Chujo renew their friendship, and they agree to marry Yugiri to Kumoinikari.

# **BIBLIOGRAPHY**