

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to World Book Dictionary vol 1 A-K the word geisha means ‘Japanese girl trained to be professional entertainer and companion for men’(1996,: 886). A geisha has more respect than a prostitute because being a geisha, a woman must master the ability to play any kinds of musical instruments and dance gracefully to entertain the guests and that requires time, hard work, and a lot of practice.

The Japanese perception towards geisha is ‘professional hostesses who entertain guests through various performing arts. Geisha girls and women are not ordinary hostesses and are not prostitute.’ (<http://gojapan.about.com/cs/japanesegeisha/a/geisha1.htm>). The difference between a geisha and a prostitute is that a geisha has the right to say no to her guest in sexual relationship but for a prostitute it is not so: ‘However, geishas do have the right to choose whether or not they will engage in sexual relations with their customers.’ (<http://www.eden.rutgers.edu/~ksabala/425/mid/feature.html>). To be a geisha for

ordinary people is a good advantage and honorable apprentice because they can have a good meal, fine clothes, and have rich guests.

Whereas a prostitute does only one thing that is having sexual intercourse with her guest when her guest agrees to pay her and does not have the privilege to say no to her guest because he has paid her. A prostitute does not have the ability to play any musical instrument or to dance, she only uses her body to make money.

But then from the western perception, a geisha is the same as a prostitute because they think that a geisha has the same duty as a prostitute that is to please men. From this perception we can see that it is contradictory to the real meaning of the word geisha.

This misinterpretation of the western people makes some people especially the Japanese people try to correct it. One of the people who tries to correct the perception is Mako Yoshikawa. With her book, she tries to change the misperception of the western people towards geisha.

In *One hundred and One ways*, it is stated that the word geisha ‘casts a spell of enchantment, conjuring the apparition of a beautiful woman, demure, docile, highly sexed and, most of all always available’ (Yoshikawa: 1999; 14). This impression occurs in western minds and later on influences the thought of the Japanese people themselves.

Through her novel, Mako Yoshikawa tries to share her thought and feelings. She tries to make people realize, after reading the novel, that they have been wrong all this time and it is Mako Yoshikawa’s aim to put the right sense of geisha. In Mako Yoshikawa Novel’s *One Hundred and One Ways*, I find lots of conflicts occurring

between the protagonist and her surrounding. These social and inner conflicts make the story more interesting to read, that is why I want to analyze the conflicts that have built the story.

In Dictionary of Literary Terms, Harry Shaw defines conflict as ‘the opposition of persons or forces upon which the action depends in drama and fiction. Dramatic conflict is the struggle which grows out of the interplay of opposing forces (idea, interest, wills) in a plot (1972: 91-92). There are three types of conflicts, namely physical, social, and inner conflicts. But in my analysis, I want to focus only on social and inner conflict. Social conflict is divided into two types: the first is ‘a struggle between man and man’ (1972: 92), while the second is ‘the struggle between man and society. Inner conflict or psychological conflict is ‘a struggle between desires within a person’ (1972: 92).

The novelist emphasizes the conflict of Asian-American people in America. The novelist succeeds in conveying the ideas of changing one’s life to the readers. However, it is not guaranteed that the concept of one’s has changed life turned to be better. That is why I choose this novel and want to analyze the content of the novel.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In analyzing the female major character in Mako Yoshikawa’s novel, I would like to state the statement of the problem as follows:

1. What conflicts does the protagonist experience in Mako Yoshikawa’s *One Hundred and One Ways*?
2. What are the causes of the conflicts?

3. How are those conflicts solved?

1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Based on the statement of the problem above, the purpose of the study is:

1. To analyze the types of conflicts between the protagonist and the other characters in Mako Yoshikawa's *One Hundred and One Ways*.
2. To analyze the causes of the conflicts.
3. To show how the conflicts develop and how they are solved.

1.4. METHODS OF RESEARCH

In writing the thesis, I use the method of library research. I begin the study by reading the primary text that is Mako Yoshikawa's novel. I then read several reference books that are relevant to the topic to support my analysis for additional information. The information and the knowledge that have been gathered are then used to analyze the text. Finally, I draw a conclusion from the research I have made.

1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

I divided the thesis into three chapters, followed by the Bibliography and the Appendix. In the first chapter, I present the Introduction, consisting of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Methods of Research and the Organization of the Thesis. In the second chapter, I analyze the social and inner conflicts of the protagonist in *One Hundred and One*

Ways. In Chapter Three, the thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendix, consisting of the Biography of the author and the Synopsis of the novel.