2. CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

X. J. Kennedy in his book *An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* says that there are six aspects of novel, they are: theme (the meaning and message in novel), plot (the development and organization of stories), character (the people in novel), setting (the background of place and time), point of view (the position or stance of the narrator), and style (the words that tell the story). Since the title of the thesis is *An Analysis of Main Characters in Arthur Golden’s Novel ‘Memoirs of a Geisha’*, this thesis focuses more on the character than other five aspects of novel.

2.1 An Aspect of Novel

A novel should not be read as that of the newspaper or even the magazine. A novel should be interpreted if one to enjoy it completely. The interpretation of a novel is generally done through the examination of the aspects of the novel itself.

Character is an important aspect of novel because when talk about novel, it may ask: who are the characters in the novel? How are characters portrayals in the novel? What’s the conflict? etc. Talking about character and its character portrayal is more interesting than the other five aspects of novel. But it does not mean that the other five aspects are not important.
2.2 The Definition of Character

It is important to know the definition of the character. In novel, a character may be defined as a verbal representation of a human being. According to Kennedy (1983:131), through action, speech, description, and commentary, authors portray characters who are worth caring about, rooting for, and even loving, although there are also characters you may laugh at, dislike, or even hate.

According to Taylor (1981:62), a character in a novel or play is not a real human being and has no life outside the literary composition; however well the illusion of reality has been created by the author.

According to Nurgiyantoro (1995:176), the important role of character is:

Dilihat dari segi peranan atau tingkat pentingnya tokoh dalam sebuah cerita, ada tokoh yang tergolong penting dan ditampilkan terus menerus sehingga terasa mendominasi sebagian besar cerita. Tokoh tersebut adalah tokoh utama cerita.

“It is seen from the important level of character in a story, there are essential characters and they are appeared continuously, so they are dominant in most of the story. It is called main character.”

According to Nurgiyantoro (1995:176-177), the main character is:

Tokoh utama adalah tokoh yang diutamakan penceritaannya dalam novel yang bersangkutkan, baik sebagai pelaku kejadian maupun yang dikenai kejadian.

“Main character is the important character in the novel. Main character is talked more, as a subject or an object.”

According to Ennedy (1991:47), the personalities of the character become familiar to us. If the story seems “true to life”, we will find the characters act in a
reasonably consistent manner, and that the author has provided them with motivation, sufficient reason to be have as they do.

Character is of interest for the very personal person that we want to see how they pursue their goals (Hamalian, 1967:238). In addition, characters in novels will be seen to grow towards an active engagement with their situations. A character’s struggle to make his own sense of the world significantly active in his own society is a transformation of the original struggle with the medium of language of the part of the author (Kennedy, 1979:2). A character is a mere construction of words meant to express an idea or view of experience and must be considered in relation to other features of the composition, such as action and setting, before its full significance can be appreciated (Taylor, 1981:62).

In a story emphasizing a main character, you may expect that each action or speech, no matter how small, is a part of a total presentation of that complex combination of both the inner and outer self that constitutes a human being. By making such actions interesting, authors help the readers to understand and appreciate the main characters.

2.3 The Types of Character

The British novelist and critic E. M Foster, in his critical work Aspect of the Novel says that there are two major types of character. They are round character and flat character. Round characters are full, complex, and rich whereas flat characters are simple ones.
2.3.1 Round Character

The basic trait of round character is that they recognize, change with, or adjust to circumstances. The round characters - usually the major figure in a story - profits from experience and undergoes a change and alternation, which may be shown in (1) an action or actions, (2) the realization of new strength and therefore the affirmation of previous decisions, (3) the acceptance of a new condition, or (4) the discovery of unrecognized truths.

Because round they usually play a main role in a story, round characters are often called the hero or heroin. Many main characters are anything but heroic, however, and it is therefore preferable to use the more neutral word protagonist. The protagonist is central to the action, moves against an antagonist, and exhibits the ability to adapt to new circumstances. To the degree that round characters are both individual and sometimes unpredictable, and because they undergo change or growth, they are dynamic. The round characters also known as the main characters because they play a main role in a story of novel.

2.3.2 Flat Character

In contrast, flat characters do not grow. They remain the same because they may be insensitive or lacking in knowledge or insight. They are static because they end where they begin. But flat characters are not therefore worthless, for they usually highlight the development of the round characters. Usually, flat characters are minor (e.g. relatives, acquaintances, functionaries), although not all minor characters are necessary flat.
Flat characters have a one-track personality; such one-dimensional characters are common in popular fiction and make for easy recognition (and, sometimes, the easy laugh).