REPRESENTATION OF GEISHA IN ARTHUR GOLDEN’S NOVEL
MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

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Jakarta, July 17, 2009

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the university or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Jakarta, June 5, 2009

Arifah Hilyati
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ABSTRACT


This research discusses the representation of Geisha in Arthur Golden’s Novel *Memoirs of a Geisha.* The writer studied the theory of representation and the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* as the unit analysis. The theory of representation is used as the theoretical framework. The method of the research is descriptive qualitative. The reason of using this method because this method is the most appropriate to be applied in this research. The writer is able to find the comprehensive and deep description about feeling, norm, faith, mental behavior, work ethos and culture embraced by either person or group in their environment. In addition to the above reason she could dig the empirical and measured facts. By using the qualitative method, the writer is able to obtain the complete data and the data has the high credibility. First, the research focuses on the representation of geisha as artistic women, exotic women, well-trained entertainer, highly paid entertainer, women with good comportment and behavior, women with glamour and luxury and sex commodity. By referring to the discussion, finally the writer comes to a conclusion that despite the negative thought of common people of geisha, they possess many qualifications particularly in art they are required to, which ordinary people will find them difficult to accomplish; these skills and talents make them to be highly appreciated.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Japanese culture is dynamic and optimistic. After the tremendous incident of two bombings in two cities of Japan, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it might be said the whole aspects of life in Japan has been destroyed. Epidemic hit almost all people, even not few numbers of people suffered physical and mental illness. The dead victims were uncountable. The economy wheel almost gave up to circle. The fertilized soil were burnt and contaminated by chemical so that disabled it to be cultivated. Nevertheless, the tremendous incident did not cause Japan discourage and gave up. In the other hand, Japan awakened and worked hard to build the country. And now, Japan has been leading the economy of Asia and dominating the economy of the world. At that time, many predicted that Japan need hundred years to awake and to build the country. Unfortunately, their prediction was wrong. Japan only need couple of years to build the country and reached its pinnacle of achievement. Even Japan leads one step ahead its rival countries which weren’t affected by the nuclear bombings.

In accordance with the historical background, people should notice that its spirit has contributed great inspiration of hard-working among most Japanese. Japan has become a great industrial country after its defeating against America in World War II. Its
achievement can not be separated from the nation behavior of being discipline, hard-working, and high dedication.

Furthermore, in carrying on the process of modernization, Japan is not only success in recovering its economic but also maintaining its culture. Japan has been maintaining the highly rooted process of tradition for hundred years. People should recognize one of thousand sub-cultures in Japan; geisha. It is one of Japanese cultural products contributing quite significant influence to Japan in the recent time.

The culture of Japans which is high dedicated, discipline and hard-working is reflected in the characteristic of geishas surviving their life. As narrated in the novel Memoirs of a Geisha written by Arthur Golden whose background between 1930-1940. The spirit to awake mentioned above has inspired Chiyo, later on called Sayuri, the central character of Arthur Golden’s novel Memoirs of a Geisha not to be submissive against the tyranny of the real life. Chiyo or Sayuri awoke and rebelled to free herself from children slavery torturing her physically and mentally. Chiyo fought strongly for her freedom against tragic fate of the cruel life. In accordance with this tragic background, later on she became a geisha, a profession she never willed to even not to imagine of.

Since geisha is one of Japanese cultural product possessing a specific complexity, the tradition of geisha is well-maintained by each generation. The social status of a geisha has a special high position in the Japanese society. And it also reflects one of Japanese cultural product which is very unique and characteristic. Such tradition and culture later on reconstructed in a novel because novel is a replica reflecting the culture and civilization of a society.
In this research, the writer is going to analyze deeper the other sides of geisha in *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden by using the theory of representation. Ordinary people consider geisha simply as prostitutes serving sex to their customers. In fact, many other positive things and great qualifications including hard work, though trainings and hard rituals which common people will find it very hard to accomplish, geisha are required to possess as described in the above explanation.

B. FOCUS OF STUDY

Based on the background of the study, this research will be focused on the exploring of the concept of representation reflected in the main character of Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*, Sayuri and other geisha as the supporting characters. The spirit and work ethos of being discipline\(^1\), hard-working, and high dedication owned by most Japans generally and the characters of the novel particularly reflects the concept of representation \(^2\) of a society in the period of 1930 -1940. Furthermore, through this novel, the writer is eager to analyze more deeply the representation concept found on geisha particularly Sayuri, the main character of the novel whose profession is more than a profession correlating with simply sexual interaction\(^3\). A geisha is required to possess qualifications of high intelligence and wide knowledge by accomplishing a number of hard, complicated and challenging rituals which common people will find it very hard to accomplish. And Japan has admitted

\(^1\) Geisha are highly required to be punctual in attending trainings of mastering art skills and to be obedient to all rules required by their teachers. Punishment will be taken when they fail to be discipline.

\(^2\) The concept of representation as defined by Judy Giles and Timothy Dalton on their book *studying culture*.

\(^3\) Ordinary people tend to think that geisha’s job is similar to prostitutes’. This thesis will prove and explain further in chapter three that geisha are required to master several of art skills instead of to offer sex to their client. Despite the fact that some geisha offer sex to their client.
geisha as a precious profession representing deeply rooted tradition and high social statues in Japanese society.

C. RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the background of study above, the writer would like to make research questions as follows:

1. How are geisha through the main character and supporting characters represented in Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*?

2. Why geisha in Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* are represented as the sex commodity?

D. OBJECTIVE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

In general, this research is aimed to prove if *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden through its characters can be analyzed by using the concept of representation.

Based on the research question, it is expected to dig inspiration and motivation for the general society that hard work, high motivation, responsibility, alertness, loyalty, discipline, dedication, and dignity and the other spiritual senses as represented by Sayuri, the main character in the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden are required factors to gain success in life.
E. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology includes several important aspects of a research such as method of the research, objective of the research, technique of data analysis, the unit of analysis and place and time of the research:

1. Method of the Research

Referring to the objective and the significance of the research, the writer uses the qualitative method. The qualitative method basically aims to observe people in their environment, to interact with them, to understand their language and interpretation concerning their environment (Nasution, 1988:5). In this research, the writer observes the people and their culture.

Since the writer uses the qualitative method, the data which taken are complete, deeper, credible and meaningful so that the objective of the research can be obtained. The reason of using this method because this method is the most appropriate to be applied in this research. Meanwhile the quantitative method was considered not appropriate to be applied in this research because the writer would face difficulties to find the comprehensive and deep description about feeling, norm, faith, mental behavior, work ethos and culture embraced by either person or group in their environment. The writer considers using the qualitative method since she could dig the empirical and measured facts. The facts which are abstract and unreachable by human sense will be very difficult to be explored. By using the qualitative method, the writer is able to obtain the complete data and the data has the high credibility.
2. **Objective of the Research**

In general, this research is aimed to prove if novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden is feasible to be analyzed using the concept of representation. Meanwhile the specific objective is to explore more deeply if the main character and other characters of the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden can also be analyzed using such concept.

Based on those research questions, it is expected to dig inspiration and motivation for the general society that hard work, high motivation, responsibility, alertness, loyalty, discipline, dedication, and dignity and the other spiritual senses as represented by Sayuri, the main character and other supporting characters in the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden are required factors to gain success in life.

3. **Technique of Data Analysis**

The collected data uses a number of sources concerning the concept of representation. The research began by analyzing Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*. Furthermore, the research continued on finding related theories from several experts such as Judy Giles, Timothy Dalton, Richard Dyer and Stuart Hall. Those data are absolutely useful to dig deeply the concept of representation reflected on Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*. The further analysis is to find the philosophical values concerning with the ethos and spirit of geisha on this novel in order to shape the concept of representation.
4. **Unit of Analysis**

Unit analysis in this research is a novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden published in 1997 by Vintage, London. The novel narrates the struggles of the main character of the novel, Sayuri and other characters of becoming and maintaining their profession as geisha which are represented in several topics.

5. **Place and Time of the Research**

This research has taken place since May 2008 and been finished in June 2009 in English Letters Department, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, States Islamic University *Syarif Hidayatullah* Jakarta. The research includes preparing, collecting, analyzing data and organizing the paper.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Representation began with early literary theory in the ideas of Plato and Aristotle, and has evolved into a significant component of language, Saussurian and communication studies.4

Representation describes the signs that stand in for and take the place of something else. It is through representation people know and understand the world and reality through the act of naming it. Signs are manipulated in order to make sense of the world. For many philosophers, both ancient and modern, man is regarded as the "representational animal" or homo symbolicum, the creature whose distinct character is the creation and the manipulation of signs – things that "stand for" or "take the place of" something else.5

Representation has been associated with aesthetics (art) and semiotics (signs). Mitchell says "representation is an extremely elastic notion, which extends all the way from a stone representing a man to a novel representing the day in the life of several Dubliners".


5 O'Shaughnessy, M & Stadler J, Media and society: an introduction, 3rd edn, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2005
Representation is in literary theory is also sometimes referred to mimesis, the Greek word which means imitation or representation. Mimesis is an imitation or representation of something else rather than an attempt to literally duplicate the original. In *The Poetics* Aristotle defined tragedy as "the imitation of an action." Aristotle believed poetry and drama were endeavours to take an example of human action and represent or re-present its essence and translate it into a new "medium" of material.

An example of this would be a play about World War II. The play would attempt to recreate the essence of a complex historical event that involved millions of people, thousands of square miles and several years in a simple representation involving a few dozen people in a few thousand square feet in a few hours. This play would be a mimesis of this historic event using stage props, lighting, and individual actors to convey the sense of what World War II was to the audience in a similar way the process of mimesis could be the creating of a film, writing a poem. Picasso painting Guernica might attempt to embody warfare as a montage of destruction of World War II. However, many classical theorists of art say the degree to which each form of art accurately embodies the essence of its subject determines the degree of its success.

Since ancient times representation has played a central role in understanding literature, aesthetics and semiotics. Plato and Aristotle are key figures in early literary theory who considered literature as simply one form of representation. Aristotle for instance, considered each mode of representation, verbal, visual or musical, as being

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6 Wheeler 2008 no details

natural to human beings. Therefore, what distinguishes humans from other animals is their ability to create and manipulate signs.  

Aristotle deemed mimesis as natural to man, therefore considered representations as necessary for people's learning and being in the world Plato, in contrast, looked upon representation with more caution. He recognized that literature is a representation of life, yet also believed that representations create worlds of illusion leading one away from the *real things*.  

For Plato, representation, like contemporary media, intervenes between the viewer and the real, creating illusions which lead one away from "real things". Plato believed that representation needs therefore, to be controlled and monitored due to the possible dangers resulting in its ability to foster antisocial emotions or encourage the imitation of evil.

The **means** of literary representation is **language**. An important part of representation is the relationship between what the material and what it represents. The questions arising from this are, "A stone may represent a man but how? And by what and by what agreement, does this understanding of the representation occur?"

One apprehends reality only through representations of reality, through texts, discourses, images: there is no such thing as direct or unmediated access to reality. But because one can see reality only through representation it does not follow that one does not see reality at all. Reality is always more extensive and complicated than any system of representation can possibly comprehend, and we always sense that this is so-

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8 Mitchell, W, "Representation", in F Lentricchia & T McLaughlin (eds), *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1990

representation never "gets" reality, which is why human history has produced so many different and changing ways of trying to get it.

Consequently, throughout the history of human culture, people have become dissatisfied with language's ability to express reality and as a result have developed new modes of representation. It is necessary to construct new ways of seeing reality, as people only know reality through representation\textsuperscript{10}. From this arises the contrasting and alternate theories and representational modes of abstraction, realism and modernism, to name a few.

In analyzing Arthur Golden’s novel ‘Memoirs of a Geisha’, the writer uses the theory of representation based on the thoughts of Judy Giles and Timothy Middleton as written on their book Studying Culture. In addition, the writer also uses the thought of Stuart Hall and other philosophers to support the writer’s finding.

Representation describes the signs\textsuperscript{11} that stand in for and take the place of something else. It is through representation people know and understand the world and


\textsuperscript{11}The signs here refer to language which are reflected by the dialogs and interaction amongst the characters of the novel Memoirs of a Geisha written by Arthur Golden. An important part of representation is the relationship between what the material and what it represents. The techniques and steps the writer uses is by notifying the language, dictions, dialogs and gestures as reflected by the characters of the novel Memoirs of a Geisha. In result, the writer could consider this technique to prove the concept of representation is able to applied to support the theoretical framework.
reality through the act of naming it. Signs are manipulated in order to make sense of the world.\textsuperscript{12}

Meanwhile, according to Giles, Representation is one of the key practices by which meanings are produces. There are three possible senses to the world ‘represent’:

1. To ‘represent’ meaning to stand in for, as in the case of a country’s flag, which when flown at a sporting event, for example signals that country’s presence at the event. The flag stands for or symbolizes a nation, distinguishing France and China, or Ireland from USA. In Britain, the royal stands for or represents /symbolizes the royal family and the institution of monarchy.

2. To ‘represent’ meaning to speak or act on behalf of, as in the sentence ‘A spokesperson on behalf of lesbian mothers voiced the concerns of the group on television. Members of Parliament represent the concern of their constituents. A person who represents a group in this sense may also serve a symbolic function. An example might be the Pope, who speaks and acts on behalf of the Roman Catholic community but might also stand as a symbol of Roman Catholicism.

3. To ‘represent’ meaning to re-present. In this sense, a biography or historical writing to represent the event of the past. Equally, a photograph re-presents a moment or event which has already occurred-it represents the

\textsuperscript{12} O'Shaughnessy, M & Stadler J, Media and society: an introduction, 3rd edition, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2005
occasion again. A photograph of painting can also, of course, represent someone or something in the sense of standing in for. Posters of rock stars, religious paintings and public statues all fulfill this function. Images that function in this way are said to be iconic.

Among those concepts of representation, the writer tend to use the third representation as defined by Judy Giles and Timothy Dalton as the most suitable concept to support this thesis, since to represent here means to represent event of the past. Novel Memoirs of a Geisha tells reader about something happened in the past as experienced by geisha as the characters in this novel in 1930’s and 1940’s. It coincidently occurred at World War II when America invaded Japan.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH FINDING

In this chapter, the writer would like to analyze the representation of geisha in Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* based on the research question. This novel is adapted from a true story of an ex geisha, Nitta Sayuri, serving as a geisha in 1920’s and 1930’s. She documented her life as geisha completely. She dictated her memoirs to the translator of this novel. Eventually, these memoirs were poured into this novel, *Memoirs of a Geisha*.

In analyzing the representation of geisha, the writer will present the discussion into several topics; The representation of geisha as the respectable and artistic women, highly paid entertainers and performers, well-trained entertainers, women with good comportment and behavior and exotic women. Despite such presentations, geisha are also represented as sex commodity.

The representation will be discussed by using the data from the character’s physical appearance, behaviors and their interaction with other characters.

1. The Representation of Geisha as Artistic Women

In *memoirs of a geisha*, geisha are represented as artistic women. Artistic refers to having or revealing creative skill, relating to or characteristic of art or artists, aesthetically pleasing.13

As the word *geisha* itself stands for ‘artisan’ or ‘artist’, a geisha is an entertainer and performer. The following is the detailed description of the profession of

geisha based on Sayuri’s experience learning art from her teacher, Teacher Mouse, and here is what the teacher told her;

“And in fact, the “gei” of “geisha” means “arts,” so the word “geisha” really means “artisan” or artist”. (Golden 1997, 141)

You must remember that a geisha, above all is an entertainer and performer. (Golden 1997, 142)

As artists and entertainers, geisha are required to master several artworks such as dancing, singing, playing many musical instruments, reading poems, arranging flowers even presenting tea ceremony or what it is called chado. However, dancing is the most important art skill geisha must master well.

Dance is the most revered of the geisha’s arts. Only the most promising and beautiful geisha are encouraged to specialize in it. (Golden 1997, 150)

Another quotation supporting the idea that dancing is very important for a geisha even the most successful geisha are dancers is the following sentences as quoted based on a conversation between Sayuri and Mameha;

“But, Mameha-san,” I said, “I don’t understand what dance has to do with it.” “Dance has everything to do with it,” she told me. “If you look around at the most successful geisha in Gion, every one of them is a dancer.” (Golden 1997, 150)

For most geisha, it is an honor to be offered opportunity of entertaining some important persons with some purposes such as making a good impression on the guests they are entertaining as told by Sayuri about her experience of entertaining The German Ambassador visiting Japan at that time, 1935.

The German Ambassador was causing quite a stir in Gion at the time. During this period, in 1935, a new government had recently come to power Germany; and though I’ve never understood much about politics, I do know that Japan was moving away from the United States these years and eager to make a good impression on the new German Ambassador. Everyone in Gion wondered who
would be given the honor of entertaining him during his upcoming visit. (Golden 1997, 229)

In several occasions such as an evening banquet of a hotel, geisha usually dance; they should be masterful in any movements and dance as attractively as they could. And in another occasion they are singers.

.....Mameha and another geisha performed a dance together, known as Chi-yo no Tomo - “Friends Everlasting” it’s a lovely piece about two women meeting again after a long absence.............geisha in Gion always use a folding fan as a prop when dancing, and Mameha in particular ways masterful in her movements. At first she closed the fan and while turning her body in circle, waved it delicately with her wrist to came a cup into which her companion poured sake for her to drink. As I say, the dance was lovely, and so was the music, which was on the shamisen by a terribly thin geisha with small, watery eyes. (Golden 1997, 171)

Geisha as the representation of artist mastering dances can be found in this novel as narrated by Sayuri based on her experience to have honor to take a role at a biggest annual event, Dances of the Old Capital.

‘Dances of the Old Capital’ was Gion’s biggest annual event. Its opening was only six weeks away, at the beginning of April. All the dancers roled had been assigned some months later, and I would have felt honored to take one. (Golden 1997, 241)

Not only dancing, in this novel, geisha are described as women who are able to play variety of musical instrument such as shamisen, a three-string guitar, Japanese flute, okawa, taiko and tsutsumi.15

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14 For geisha, to be given to entertain the most important persons like ambassadors is an honor since only certain people are given such opportunity.

15 Tsutsumi, which is played in a kneeling position like the other entire musical instrument a geisha has to master. Tsutsumi is different from the other drums because it’s held on the shoulder and played with the hand, unlike the larger okawa, which rest on the thigh, or the larger drum of all, called taiko, which sits edgewise on a stand and is struck with fat drumsticks. Geisha study them all at one time or other. A drum may seem like an instrument even a child can play, but actually there are various ways of striking each of them, such as –for the big taiko–bringing the arm across the body and then swinging the drumstick backhand, you might say, which is called uchikomi; or striking with one arm while bringing the other up the same moment, which we call sarashi. There are other methods as well, and each produces a different
In addition to dancing and playing musical instrument, in this novel they are also described as the representation of artistic women who are able to sing many different types of songs such as popular ballads, songs of kabuki theaters and songs of musical poems.

*After drums, Japanese flute, and shamisen, their next lesson is usually in singing. They often sing at parties in Japan; and of course, parties are mostly what men come to Gion for. But even if a girl could not hold a tune and will never be asked to perform in front of others, she has to still study singing to help her understand dance. This is because the dances are set to particular pieces of music, often performed by a singer accompanying herself on the shamisen.* (Golden 1997, 143)

*There were many different types of songs but in their lessons they studied five different kinds. Some were popular ballads; some were long pieces from Kabuki Theater telling a story; others were something like a short musical poem. It would be senseless for these geisha to try describing the songs. But geisha found most of them enchanting.* (Golden 1997, 143)

Not only dancing, performing musical instrument and singing, a geisha must also possess skill of performing a *kadou,* Japanese tea ceremony. It isn’t unusual for a party at a private residence to begin with a brief tea ceremony. Usually, geisha make the tea and serve it to guests who come to see the seasonal dances in Gion (district of okiya, a teahouse where geisha belong to).

*Tea ceremony is a very important part of a geisha’s training. It isn’t unusual for a party at a private residence to begin with a brief tea ceremony. And the sound, but only after a great deal of practice. On top of this, the orchestra is always in view of the public, so all this movements must be graceful and attractive, as well as being in a unison with other players. Half of the work is in making the right sound; the other half is in doing it proper way. Another musical instrument a geisha must be skillful of playing is Japanese flute*

16 *Tea ceremony is a very important part of a geisha’s training. Tea ceremony reflects the richness of tradition. It isn’t unusual for a party at a private residence to begin with a brief tea ceremony. Usually, the guests who come to see the seasonal dances in Gion (district of okiya, where geisha belong to) are first served tea made by geisha.*
guests who come to see the seasonal dances in Gion are first served tea made by geisha. (Golden 1997, 141)

Instead of the explanation above regarding the representation of geisha as entertainers or artist, this novel narrates that most geisha are also talented of posing as models for famous big companies as experienced by Sayuri when she modeled for Sumitomo bank in Osaka. It was such a glamorous experience.

If you were to go around Japan and see the various works Uchida produced while I modeled for him during that winter and the years that followed—such as one of his only surviving of oil paintings, hanging in the boardroom of the Sumitomo Bank in Osaka—you might imagined it was a glamorous experience to have posed for him. (Golden 1997, 227)

2. The Representation of Geisha as Highly Paid Entertainer and Performer

Since most geisha possessing high skill in entertainment, it would be an understatement to say that a geisha becomes famous and highly paid. A great number of highly paid jobs easily come to such geisha.

One character of this novel, Mameha, is probably one of the two or three best-known geisha in all Japan. Another character is a famous geisha Mametsuki, who served as geisha before World War I. Those geisha were not only highly paid but also very famous at the time. The following is a quotation endorsing the above explanation.

Mameha was certainly one of these top geisha; in fact, as I came to learn, she was probably one of the two or three best-known geisha in all Japan. You may have heard something about the famous geisha Mametsuki....(Golden 1997, 149)

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17 It is not mentioned exactly how much they were paid. However, through some indications such as their luxurious lifestyle by living in luxurious apartments, riding luxurious limousines, attending high class events, wearing expensive kimono priced 6000 up to 7000 yens (this values were considered very high for the ordinary Japanese at that time in world war II, it was equal a year salary for an ordinary worker) and expensive cosmetics they put on, the writer could infer that these geisha were highly paid.
They were in big demands. In the early 1920’s, the great number of big companies in Japan featured them as their model of advertisement advertised the image of the companies such as the Japan Travel Bureau featured one of geisha, Mameha, a famous apprentice geisha in the early 1920’s for its first international advertising campaign. The posters of its international advertising campaign showed a lovely photograph of Mameha, posing with the background of the pagoda from the Toji Temple in southeastern Kyoto.

But in the early 1920’s, the Japan Travel Bureau began its first international advertising campaign. The posters showed a lovely photograph of the pagoda from the Toji Temple in southeastern Kyoto, with a cherry tree to one side and a lovely young apprentice geisha on the other side looking very shy and graceful, and exquisitely delicate. That apprentice geisha was Mameha. (Golden 1997, 149)

Young apprentice geisha contribute to the representation of geisha in the novel since every geisha must accomplish the process of becoming an apprentice by attending several hard trainings of mastering art skills. And these future geisha contribute significant thing in Japanese culture.

It is feasible to say that Mameha became worldwide famous since the poster was displayed in big cities all over the world, with the word “Come and Visit the Land of the Rising Sun” in all sort of foreign languages—not only English, but German, French, Russian, and other languages. The following is a quotation in this novel endorsing the above explanation based on what Sayuri told the readers;

*It would be an understatement to say that Mameha became famous. The poster was displayed in big cities all over the world, with the word “Come and Visit the Land of the Rising Sun” in all sort of foreign languages—not only English,*

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18 Apprentice here refers to a young geisha in the process of becoming a real geisha. They are required to attend some trainings of mastering art skills. These young geisha are not allowed to perform before the audiences except they are well trained and master these art skills very well.
but German, French, Russian, and...oh, other languages I’ve even never heard of. (Golden 1997, 149)

What make geisha were highly paid is that they served numbers of the world’s important persons visiting Japan including several head of states, prime ministers, aristocrats, writers, best comedians, politicians and luminaries. These world’s important persons attend the artistic performance of geisha. As sayuri described about her senior, Mameha, one of famous geisha at her time whose good luck of experiencing to serve these world’s important persons.

“Mameha was only sixteen at the time, but suddenly she found herself being summoned to meet every head of state who come to Japan, and every aristocrat from England or Germany, and every millionaire from united states. She poured sake for the great writer Thomas Mann, who afterward told her a long dull story through interpreter that went on and on for nearly an hour; as well as Charlie chaplin and sun yat-sen, and later ernest hemingway, ... In the years since then, Mameha had grown only more famous by putting on a number of widely publicized dance recitals at the Kabukiza Theater in Tokyo, usually attended by the prime ministers and a great many other luminaries.” (Golden 1997, 149)

3. The Representation of Geisha as the Well-Trained Entertainers

As explained previously concerning the professionalism of being a geisha, a geisha had some obligations including attending school or training to support their career as entertainers. There were two steps in becoming well trainee;

1. Formal education where geisha ought to attend the school where they learnt arts such as dancing kabuki, singing ballad songs, playing several Japanese traditional musical instruments, arranging flower and presenting tea ceremony from expert teachers.
2. Informal education where they learnt how to behave and interact with others from their seniors since geisha are represented as the persons to bring good image to the world.

Most of the geisha attended the school in early age, in some cases at the age of three years and three days. Those few who’d started as young as that were mostly the daughters of the geisha themselves, and had been raised in such a way that dance and tea ceremony were a part of their daily life.

Narrated in this novel, both trainings and teachers were very strict so that it caused geisha feeling quite depressed and afraid of making mistake in accomplishing the training. Their teachers would absolutely punish them physically when they dd mistake.

The following is what Sayuri felt about her teacher during the training.

She was very strict, like most of the teachers, and naturally we were afraid of making mistakes. It wasn’t uncommon for her to take the flute from some poor girls in order to hit her on the shoulder with it. (Golden 1997, 142)

Discipline was also strictly applied during training. Students weren’t strictly allowed to be late for school; otherwise, their teachers would be very furious and would not allow them to join the training as punishment. The following is how Sayuri told readers about her best mate, pumpkin, who once came late for the training. The teacher warned her sarcastically.

After this I learned why pumpkin had been so worried being the last student. Because now the girl with the disheveled hair, who’d been rushing to the school as we’d left for breakfast, came to the front of the room and bowed. (Golden 1997, 56)

“Don’t waste your time trying to be courteous to me!” Teacher Mouse squeaked at her. “If you hadn’t slept so late this morning, you might have arrived here in time to learn something.” (Golden 1997, 57)
The girl apologized and soon began to play, but the teacher paid no attention at all. She just said, “You sleep too late in the mornings. How do you expect me to teach you, when you can’t take the trouble to come to school like the other girls and sign up properly? Just go back to your place. I don’t want to be bothered you.” (Golden 1997, 57)

And a girl who wasn’t well-mastered would never be asked to perform in from of others; she ought to study harder to help her understand the performance.

Geisha, prior to presenting an art performance, they were required to practice harder in order to present the best performance for their audience. It was told by Sayuri regarding her experience in rehearsing before her performance for a biggest annual event, *Dances of the Old Capital*.

*This role was given to me in Mid-march, so I had only a month or so to rehearse it. Fortunately my dance teacher was very helpful and often worked with me privately during the afternoons.* (Golden 1997, 243)

As part of training geisha had to accomplish is how to play any musical instrument with their teachers such as shamisen, *tsutsumi* a kind of small drum, *okawa*, larger drum of all, called *taiko*, *uchikomi*; or striking with one arm while bringing the other up the same moment, it is called *sarashi*. The teachers were naturally so strict that these geisha were afraid of making mistakes. Sometimes one of these teachers took the flute from some poor girl making mistake in order to hit her on the shoulders with it.

The last lesson of all trainings was presenting a tea ceremony. As explained in the previous sub unit that tea ceremony was a very important part of a geisha’s

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19 This was a subject many books had been written about, it wasn’t explained in much detail. But basically, a tea ceremony was conducted by one or two people who sitting before their guests and preparing tea in a very traditional manner, using beautiful cups, and whisks made from bamboo, and so fort. Even the guests were a part of ceremony because they ought to hold the cup in a certain manner and drink from it just so. The reader might think of it as sitting down to have a nice cup of tea; it’s more like a sort of dance, or even mediation, conducted while kneeling. The tea itself is made from tea leaves ground into a powder and then whisked with boiled water into a frothy green mix they called *matcha*, which was very unpopular with foreigners. It looked like green soapy water and had a bitter taste that takes a certain getting used to.
training. It was not unusual for a party at a private residence to begin with a brief tea ceremony. And the guests who came to see the seasonal dances in Gion, geisha district, were first served tea made by geisha.

The following quotations describe the learning process in detail;

*Tea ceremony is a very important part of a geisha’s training. It isn’t unusual for a party at a private residence to begin with a brief tea ceremony. And the guests who come to see the seasonal dances in Gion are first served tea made by geisha.* (Golden 1997, 144)

The impact of describing the learning process in detail to the representation of geisha is a knowledge reader should notice that it is not easy to become geisha. They must accomplish numerous complicated trainings.

Not only in such school explained above where geisha ought to learn from their teachers but they also learnt from their seniors which were considered as the expert ones.20 Senior geisha had important role in tutoring them by the time the young geisha were finally ready to make their debut as apprentice, as described in this novel;

*I should explain just what Mameha meant by “older sister”, even though at the time, I hardly knew much about it myself. By the time a girl is ready to make her debut as an apprentice, she needs to have established a relationship with a more experienced geisha.* (Golden 1997, 128)

The impact of the word ‘debut’ to the representation of geisha in this novel is an explanation to readers that every geisha experiences of making her debut in performing before audiences. Making a debut is a process every geisha should accomplish. And the

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20 In the world of geisha, geisha were accustomed to have “older sister” and “younger sister” referring to their senior or junior which was also known as apprentice geisha. Senior geisha bears pretty great responsibility in guiding her apprentice

21 Debut here refers to a young geisha perform art skill such as dancing kabuki, singing ballad songs, reading poetry and playing Japanese traditional musical instruments for the first time before the audiences.
writer consider this explanation as the representation of geisha as the well-trained entertainers.

It was also described in this novel that Sayuri had an older sister, Mameha and so had Hatsumomo’s, an apprentice geisha whose an older sister, the great Tomihatsu,

*Mameha had mentioned hatsumomo’s older sister, the great Tomihatsu who had been already an old woman when she trained Hatsumomo; but older sisters weren’t always experts to the geisha they trained. Any geisha could act as older sister to a younger girl, as long as she had at least one day’s seniority. (Golden 1997, 128)*

As part of training to lead a geisha to become professional, senior geisha might be the central figure for the young geisha, she taught her junior many things concerning satisfying their guest including the proper way in entertaining their guests, what the young geisha should have and should have not do toward their guests. Even the small thing personally that a young geisha should have learnt such as adjusting their make up and dress, and also what the young geisha should have and should not have done, as described in this novel,

*Some geisha may not take the role as seriously as they should, but an older sister who does her job properly becomes the most important figure in a young geisha’s life. She does a great deal more than just making sure her younger sister learns the proper way of blending embarrassments and laughter when a men tells a naughty joke, or helping her select the right grade of wax to use under her make up. (Golden 1997, 128)*

Senior geisha beared pretty great responsibility in guiding her apprentice in order to keep her own reputation including keeping her apprentice to have good behavior toward her customers and it was aimed to make benefit her finance to support her living cost*[^22].* It was described in the novel that taking on the role of older sister often felt about

[^22]: Because an apprentice geisha was obligated to pay fee to either to her older sister or to her patronage. an apprentice geisha who succeeds in making benefit meant a success to her older sister or to her patronage.
like carrying a sack of rice back and forth across the city. Because not only was a younger sister as dependent on her older sister as a passenger is on the train she rode; but when the geisha behaved badly, it was her older sister who ought to responsibility.23

Senior geisha also had responsibility in introducing and promoting her junior to customers. She encouraged her junior to attract them. In this way, the customers would pay high fees to spend the evening chatting with the junior geisha. Furthermore this customer probably would not summon the junior geisha on his next visit.

She must also make sure her younger sister attracts the notice of people she’ll need to know. She does this by taking her around Gion and presenting her to the mistresses of all the proper teahouses, to the man who makes wigs for stage performances, to the chefs at the important restaurants, and so on. (Golden 1997, 128)

An apprentice geisha would be guaranteed by her senior (her older sister) to be famous in the city. Afterward, the apprentice geisha ought to work hard to become a distinguished dancer. This is supported by the following quotation of this novel; a dialogue between Mameha, a senior geisha to Sayuri, her apprentice describing her great responsibility in guiding her apprentice in order to keep her own reputation including keeping her apprentice to have good behavior toward her customers;

“My job will be to make sure you’re famous in Gion by then, but it’s up to you to work hard at becoming an accomplished dancer. If you can’t make it at least the fifth rank by the age of sixteen, nothing I can do will help you, and Mrs. Nitta will be delighted to win her bet with me.”(Golden 1997, 150)

Since geisha is represented as women bringing a good image, they were required to possess good manner; they were trained in behaving properly toward others

23 The reason a busy and successful geisha went to all this trouble for a younger geisha was because everyone in Gion benefits when an apprentice succeeded. The apprentice herself benefited by paying off her debts overtime, of course; and if this geisha was lucky, she would end up mistress to a wealthy man. The older sister benefited by receiving a portion of her younger sister’s fees-as did the mistresses of the various teahouses where hair ornament where the girl entertained.
such as in bowing, kneeling and talking. Bowing, kneeling and talking properly are considered to be the way to show their respect to others. There were several steps of training geisha should accomplish and these geisha should have been obedient. The following sentences describe how Mameha tried hard to train Sayuri regarding this matter;

We made our way up to the street with nearly everyone we passed saying something to Mameha, or at the very least bowing to her, and afterward giving me a little nod or bow as well. Several times I stopped to bow back, with the result that I fell a step or two behind Mameha She could see the difficulty I was having, and took me to a quiet alleyway to show me the proper way of walking. When I need to bow to someone, I stopped my feet. “Slowing the feet is a way of showing respect.” She said. “The more you slow up, the greater the respect. You might stop altogether to bow to one of your teachers, but for anyone else, don’t slow more than you need to, for heaven’s sake, or you’ll never get anywhere. Go along at a constant pace when you can, taking little steps to keep the bottom of your kimono fluttering. When a woman walks, she should give the impression of waves rippling over a sandbar.” (Golden 1997, 157)

Their teachers always insisted them on having good manner, bearing their students in behaving, speaking and maintaining their appearance. These geisha were required to behave properly and speak the most proper language. The following is Sayuri’s explanation regarding this matter.

In all of these classes, music and dance were only part of what the geisha learned. Since a geisha who had mastered the various arts would still come off badly at a party if she had not learned proper comportment and behavior. This was the reason the teachers always insisted upon good manner and bearing their students, even when the girl was only scurrying down the hall toward the toilet. When a geisha talking a lesson in shamisen, for example, this geisha would be corrected for speaking and anything but the most proper language, or for speaking in a regional accent rather than in Kyoto speech, or for slouching, or walking in lumbering steps. In fact, the most severe scolding a geisha was likely to receive probably won’t be for playing her instrument badly or failing to learn the words to a song, but rather for having dirty fingernails, or being disrespectful, or something of that sort. (Golden 1997, 143)

And the following is the quotation of Mameha as a senior geisha or older sister to Sayuri, her younger sister or apprentice geisha describing pretty great responsibility in
guiding her apprentice in order to keep her own reputation including keeping her apprentice to have good behavior toward her customers; a senior geisha insisted the obedience of her apprentice; an apprentice geisha ought to be careful about the world she presented to the world. A senior geisha had very strict terms.

“It’s time you were; a geisha must be very careful about the image she presents to the world. Now, as I say, I have very strict terms. To begin with, I expect you what I ask without questioning me or doubting me in any way. I know you’ve disobeyed Hatsumomo and Mrs. Nitta from time to time you might think it’s understandable; but if you ask me, you should have been more obedient in the first place and perhaps none of this unfortunate things would ever have happened to you.” (Golden 1997, 140)

The underlined sentence above that a geisha must be very careful about the image she presents to the world. Since she is represented as the woman with good comportment. The effect is she must keep her manner well toward anyone unconditionally.

And Sayuri, as an apprentice geisha tried hard and didn’t give up accomplishing such training. She obeyed whatever her senior, Mameha had ordered her to do. And the following sentences describe the process of Sayuri learning how to walk properly in order to become a good geisha;

I practiced walking up and down the alley as Mameha had described, looking straight toward my feet to see if my kimono fluttered as it should. When Mameha was satisfied, we set out again. (Golden 1997, 157)

Greeting and the way of walking were part of manners geisha were supposed to do especially for the younger to the elder. Usually the younger stopped their walk, afterward bowing and greeting the elder in order to show their respect. The following is
the way Mameha and Sayuri did toward either the younger geisha middle-aged or elderly woman. The younger ought to bow first.

Most of our greetings, I found, fell into one of two simple patterns. Young geisha, as we passed them, usually slowed or even stopped completely and gave Mameha a deep bow, to which Mameha responded with a kind of word or two and little nod; then the young geisha would give me something of a puzzled look and an certain bow, which I would return much more deeply—for I was junior to every woman we encountered. When we passed a middle-aged or elderly woman, however, Mameha nearly always bowed first; then the woman returned a respectful bow, but not as deep as Mameha’s, and afterward looked me up and down before giving me a little nod. I always responded to these nods with the deepest bows I could manage while keeping my feet in motion. (Golden 1997, 157)

4. The Representation of Geisha as the Person with Good Comportment and Behavior

In this novel, despite the fact that geisha are represented as the real entertainment mastering various art skills, they are also represented as the women with good behavior. As geisha were required to be professional in anything she did they ought to have good comportment and behavior. They were said to bring a good image to the world. They were required to keep dignity and modesty representing the Japanese. Bowing and kneeling were regarded as the way to respect others, anyone in any way, unconditionally. And geisha did it. The following is what Sayuri did toward an elderly woman she had thought that she had been one of her teacher.

But I bowed back, in a moment she was gone. I thought probably she was one of my teachers.....(Golden 1997, 156)

In behaving toward anyone particularly toward respectful one, geisha expressed their politeness by bowing or kneeling in order to respect them as narrated by Sayuri about how she respect her American customer, Dr. Crab, She bowed and knelt deeply.
…normally I would have bowed on the mats, so I went ahead and knelt on the rug to bow on the same way. (Golden 1997, 240)

In another occasion when Sayuri met baron, she also did the same way;

*I bowed him to reply and he strode off down hallway to the toilet...* (Golden 1997, 128)

5. The Representation of Geisha as exotic women

'Exotic' in general means foreign, it can also mean seductive, mysterious and desirable. Meanwhile, exotic can be defined as intriguingly unusual or different, like foreign, but in an alluring way.

*Geisha are also famous the world over as an emblem of certain aspects of Japanese culture that are imagined as erotic and exotic.*

In this novel, their exoticism is reflected by their appearance such as their make up, dressing and hair style so that make them different from any other ordinary people. The following are the appearances which made them definitely different causing others perplexed to see them in such peculiar looking with extraordinary make up, dressing and hairstyle. As told by Sayuri when she accompanied Mameha to Kyoto University to attend a sumo exhibition.

*They seemed to find Mameha and me so exotic that they stopped to watch as we strolled past, and even made jokes to one another.* (Golden 1997, 194)

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24 Both Japanese and outsiders consider geisha as the exotic women. In this novel, their exoticism is reflected by their appearance such as their make up, dressing and hair style so that make them different from any other ordinary people.
25 http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/
28 They here refers to crowd of visitors including young men, old men and numbers of women attending the sumo exhibition at the Kyoto University’s old exhibition hall.
They became the center of attention in public areas which are numerous walks of life crowded in this university; both Japanese and foreigners were there. These people were attracted because of these geisha put on their make up. And they became foreign because they applied several things\(^{29}\) to their face. Even though this was the way a geisha beautify themselves. Some people thought it differently. They made fun of the geisha which this had been also thought by Sayuri when she was a child.

These geisha knew how to bring out the beauty in their features. It was described in this novel based on what Sayuri was thinking about geisha in general reflected by Hatsumomo, her rival geisha;

> If you’ve ever seen a child cut holes in paper to make a mask, this was how Hatsumomo looked, until she dampened some smaller brushes and used them to fill in the cutouts. After this she looked as if she’d fallen face first into a bin of rice flour, for her whole face was ghastly white. She looked like the demon she was, (Golden 1997, 62)

After painting their faces like a bizarre white mask, these geisha painted the back of their neck. According to this novel, women’s neck matter is described specifically. Japanese men felt about a woman’s neck and throat the same way that men

\(^{29}\)The application of makeup is hard to perfect and is a time-consuming process. Makeup is applied before dressing to avoid dirtying the kimono. First, a wax or oil substance, called bintsuke-abura, is applied to the skin. Next, white powder is mixed with water into a paste and applied with a bamboo brush starting from the neck and working upwards. After the foundation layer is applied, a sponge is patted all over the face, throat, chest, the nape and neck to remove excess moisture and to blend the foundation. Next the eyes and eyebrows are drawn in. Traditionally charcoal was used, but today modern cosmetics are used. The eyebrows and edges of the eyes are colored black with a thin charcoal; a geisha also applies red around her eyes. After the foundation layer is applied, a sponge is patted all over the face, throat, chest, the nape and neck to remove excess moisture and to blend the foundation. Next the eyes and eyebrows are drawn in. Traditionally charcoal was used, but today modern cosmetics are used. The eyebrows and edges of the eyes are colored black with a thin charcoal; a geisha also applies red around her eyes. The chalky white look like powder or cream the geisha use to cover their faces reminds the writer of bizarre white mask. The face powder is pale yellow cream made of nightingale droppings. It was believed to be very good for the skin. Afterward, their faces are covered with the pieces of wax rubbed into. At last, it is rubbed into their necks and chests. These geisha take sometime to wipe their hands clean on a rag, and then moisten one of her flat make up brushes in a dish of water and rub it into their makeup until they have a chalky white paste. They used to paint their face and neck, but left their eyes bare, as well as the area around their lips and nose.
in the West might have felt about women’s leg. This was why geisha wore collars of their kimono so low in the back that the first few bumps of the spine were visible. Their backs were painted with dramatic pictures. They did this to attract men as described in this paragraph based on Sayuri’s admiration to Hatsumomo’s appearance;

“Auntie painted onto the back of Hatsumomo’s neck a design called sanbon-ashi—“three legs.” It makes a very dramatic picture, for you feel as if you’re looking at the bare skin of the neck through little tapering points of a white face. It was years before I understood the erotic effect it has on men; but in a way, it’s like a woman peering out from between her fingers. In fact, a geisha leaves a tiny margin skin bare all around the hairline, causing her makeup to look even more artificial, something like a mask worn in Noh drama. When a man sits beside her and sees her makeup like a mask, he becomes that much more aware of the bare skin beneath. (Golden 1997, 63)

The white makeup covered the face, neck, and chest, with two or three unwhitened areas (forming a "W" or "V" shape, usually a traditional "W" shape) left on the nape, to accentuate this traditionally erotic area( some parts of women body raising up men’s sexual desire), and a line of bare skin around the hairline, which created the illusion of a mask. All that remained were the final touches on their makeup and the ornaments in her hair.

Another reason that made these geisha look so exotic is the way they dressed. They wore such luxurious fabulous kimono into which every eye would be caught. The complicated costume of kimono was confusing to people who weren’t accustomed to it.

But the way it was worn made perfect sense. That what Sayuri told in this novel;

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30 Some geisha used a tiny lacquer box containing rouge for their lips. They use a small brush to paint it on. The fashion at that time was to leave the upper lip unpainted, which made the lower lip look fuller. White makeup causes all sorts of curious illusions; if a geisha were to paint the entire surface of her lips, her mouth would end up looking like two big slices of tuna. So most geisha prefer a poutier shape, more like the bloom of a violet. Unless a geisha has lips of this shape to begin with-and very few do- she nearly always paints on a more circle-shaped mouth than she actually has.
What happened next made very little sense to me at the time, because the complicated costume of kimono is confusing to people who aren’t accustomed to it. But the way it’s worn makes perfect sense if it’s explained properly. (Golden 1997, 64)

The way ordinary housewives and geisha wore kimono were definitely different. Housewives wore kimono using all sorts of padding to keep the robe from bunching unattractively at the waist, with the result that they end up looking perfectly cylindrical, like a wood column in a temple hall. Meanwhile, geisha wore kimono so frequently they hardly need any padding, and bunching never seemed to be a problem. The kimono itself was also heavy, with long, swinging sleeves. It is noticed that when a woman was wearing kimono and stretching out her arms, the fabric below the sleeve hung down to form something like a pocket. It was described in this novel, Hatsumomo, one of geisha one day wore her kimono with brocade in shades of brown and gold. Below the waist, deer in their rich brown coloring of autumn nuzzled one another, with golds and rusts behind them in a pattern like fallen leaves on a forest floor. Her obi (waist-belt) was plum-colored, interwoven with silver threads. This geisha’s appearance was so marvelous that made Sayuri felt envy with her;

I felt miserable with envy, watching her. Her kimono was brocade in shades of brown and gold. Below the waist, deer in their rich brown coloring of autumn nuzzled one another, with golds and rusts behind them in a pattern like fallen leaves on a forest floor. Her obi was plum-colored, interwoven with silver threads. I didn’t know it at the time, but the outfit she wore probably cost as much as a policeman or a shopkeeper might make in an entire year. And yet to look at hatsumomo standing there, when she turned around to glance back at herself in the free-standing mirror, you would have thought that no amount of money on earth could have made a woman look as glamorous as she did. (Golden 1997, 65)

Both housewives and geisha would begin by taking off their makeup robes and tucking a silk slip around the bare hips; which was called koshimaki-“hip wrap.” It was

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31 This baggy pocket, which is called furī, is the part that’s so long on the kimono of an apprentice geisha.
followed by a short-sleeved kimono undershirt, tied shut at the waist, and then the pads, which looked like small contoured pillows with strings affixed for tying them into place, as described in this paragraph;

To begin with you must understand that a housewife and a geisha wear kimono were different. When a housewife wears kimono, she uses all sorts of padding to keep the robe from bunching unattractively at the waist, with the result that she ends up looking perfectly cylindrical, like a wood column in a temple hall. But a geisha wears kimono so frequently she hardly needs any padding, and bunching never seems to be a problem. Both housewives and geisha will begin by taking off their makeup robes and tucking a silk slip around the bare hips; which is called koshimaki—“hip wrap.” It’s followed by a short-sleeved kimono undershirt, tied shut at the waist, and then the pads, which look like small contoured pillows with strings affixed for tying them into place. In Hatsumomo’s case, with her traditional small-hipped, willowy figure, and her experience of wearing kimono for so many years, she didn’t use padding at all. (Golden 1997, 64)

When a geisha performed a dance, or sometimes even when she walked along the street, she raised the hem of her kimono in her left hand to keep it out of the way. This had the effect of exposing the under robe below the knees; the pattern and fabric of the under robe ought to be coordinated with the kimono. And, in fact, the under robe’s collar showed as well, just like the collar of a man’s shirt when he wore business suit. In completing their dress, geisha wore tabi, it was white sock. Afterwards, these geisha wore obi, it was like a belt which the way to put it on was not as simple as it might have sounded. Obi was wrapped around the waist; it covered the area from the breastbone all the way to below the navel. Most people who knew nothing of kimono seemed to think the obi was simply tied in the back as if it were a string; but nothing could be further from the truth. A dresser took several minutes to tie a geisha’s obi, as described in this paragraph based on what Sayuri told readers;

Mr. Bekku’s principal job as dresser was to tie the obi, which isn’t as simple job it might sound. An obi like the one hatsumomo wore is twice as long as man is
tall, and nearly as wide as woman’s shoulder. wrapped around the waist, it covers the area from the breastbone all the way to below the navel. Most people who know nothing of kimono seem to think the obi is simply tied in the back as if it were a string; but nothing could be further from the truth. A half dozen cords and clasps are needed to keep it in place, and a certain amount of padding must be used as well to shape the knot. Mr. bekku took several minutes to tie hatsumomo’s obi. When he was done, hardly a wrinkle could be seen anywhere in the fabric, thick and heavy as it was. (Golden 1997, 65)

That is the way geisha dressed, looked exotic, marvelous, glamorous so that it was considered strange and different from the ordinary women did. All were aimed to attract men.

In addition to the way geisha did make up and dressed up, another appearance which made geisha looked so exotic was their hairstyle. Every young geisha might be proud of her hairstyle. The most famous hair style among geisha was “split peach”. The uniqueness of this hairstyle frequently attracted men’s attention as described in this paragraph;

“Most of these innocent little girls have no idea how provocative the ‘split peach’ hairstyle really is! Imagine that you’re walking along behind a young geisha, thinking all sorts of naughty thoughts about what you might like to do to her, and then you see on her head this split-peach shape, with a big splash of red inside the cleft…and what do you think of?” (Golden 1997, 163)

6. The Representation of Geisha as Women with Glamour and Luxury

As it was explained previously that geisha were highly paid for their job and the effect of this high pay was the way they did in their life, glamour and luxury. Since they were highly distinguished entertainers and performers, it can be taken an inference that

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32 When a geisha’s hair is evenly waxed, the hairdresser sweep the forelock back and bring the rest up into a large knot like a pincushion on the top of the head. When viewed from the back, this pincushion has a split in it, as if it’s cut in two, which gives the hairstyle its name of “split peach.” The knot-which is called the “pincushion”-is formed by wrapping the hair around a piece of fabric. In back where the knot is split, the fabric is left visible; it might be any design or color, but in the case of an apprentice geisha-after a certain point in her life, at least-it’s always red silk.
their customers were also some famous and highly distinguished customers including head states, prime ministers, aristocrats, famous authors, famous comedians, millionaires, distinguished interpreters and so forth as described in this novel. Not all people except the extraordinary one could enjoy such luxury in Japan in the period of World War II in Japan, but geisha could. After their hard work, Geisha enjoyed their life of all luxury offered by their customers. The following is how Sayuri told her experience when accompanying her senior, Mameha in riding limousine. At that time until today, limousine was and is regarded as such an extraordinary luxurious car which only extraordinary person could afford. This sentence is an explanation to describe the luxury life through their riding.

On another occasion I joined her to accompany the former president of Nippon Telephone & telegraph on a tour of Kyoto by limousine (Golden 1997, 183)

Sayuri who later on became a very successful and adored geisha after her decision moving to New York accompanying her danna, ken Iwamura or called the Chairman. In New York, she lived in a very luxurious apartment, the Waldorf Towers. She established her own okiya or teahouse serving Japanese businessmen and politicians traveling to the United States. In any case, Sayuri, the main character of this novel later on moved to America. She spent many remarkable days in many fabulous places from Hawaii, continued to Los Angeles and finally to New York. She explored United States. In US, she settled at a luxurious hotel, the Waldorf Astoria Hotel and later on moving to a very luxurious apartment, the Waldorf Towers and spending times enjoying luxuries life.
Living in New York had brought her into an amazing experience she had never imagined before. She involved herself into a high-class lifestyle by attending several prestigious places such as museums and restaurants in New York and engaging some activities which high-class people usually did and met several very important persons including the new vice president of Nippon telephone & Telegraph, Japanese Consul-General who had formerly been mayor of Kobe; a professor of political science from Kyoto University and several Japanese remarkable artists and writers. This idea is supported by this quotation;

*During lunch one afternoon, I found myself in his private room in the back, entertaining a number of men I hadn’t seen in years –the vice president of Nippon telephone & Telegraph; the new Japanese consul-General who had formerly been mayor of Kobe; a professor of political science from Kyoto University. It was almost like being back to Gion once again. (Golden 1997, 424)*

*I spend my time in a variety of other ways instead. In the mornings I often join a group of japon writers and artist from the area to study subjects that interests us-such as poetry or music, during one-month-long session, the history of New York City. I lunch with a friend most days. (Golden 1997, 427)*

In New York, Sayuri established her own okiya or teahouse serving many very important persons such as Japanese businessmen and politicians traveling to the United States. And the teahouse she run in New York City gained the success.

*In august of the same year, I moved to New York City to set up my own very small teahouse for Japanese businessmen and politicians traveling through the United States. (Golden 1997, 426)*

*My little teahouse, on the second floor of an old club off fifth avenue, was modestly successful from the very beginning; (Golden 1997, 426)*

She enjoyed her life with all luxuries and prestige which she gained through all hardship, struggle, high motivation and great willingness to release all oppression and
harassment. She fought strongly for her freedom against tragic fate of the cruel life. Eventually, all misery and suffering became a successful conclusion.

7. The Representation of Geisha as the sex commodity

Geisha are represented as sex commodity. On several occasions, people often considered them not as entertainers but as sex commodity. Narrated in this novel, Sayuri, later on moved to New York. On an event party, she was introduced to several Americans. In the thought of most Americans, geisha was the representation of prostitutes instead of entertainers and performers.

Since moving to New York I’ve learned what the word “geisha” really means to most westerners. From time to time at elegant parties, I’ve been introduced to some young woman or other in a splendid dress and jewelry. When she learns I was once a geisha in Kyoto, she forms her mouth into sort of smile, although the corners don’t turn up quite as they could. She has no idea what to say! and then the burden of conversation falls to the man or a woman who has introduced us—because I’ve never really learned much English, even after all these years. Of course, by this time there’s little point even in trying, because this woman is thinking “My goodness… I’m talking with a prostitute…” (Golden 1997, 291)

Regardless of the explanation in the previous paragraph, in the world of geisha, it was known *mizuage*. Of all the important moments in the life of a geisha, *mizuage* certainly ranked as high as any. Referring to Mameha explanation to Sayuri asking about the meaning of *mizuage* that it was the first time a woman’s virginity was explored by a man. And there was a process for a man in winning *mizuage*.

“We call what ‘mizuage’?
“The first time a woman’s cave is explored by man’s eel. That is what we call “mizuage.”” (Golden 1997, 232)

Now, mizu means “water” and age means “raise up” or “place on” so that the term “mizuage” sounds as if it might have something to do with raising up water or placing something on water. (Golden 1997, 232)
Geisha’s virginity was in auction for the first time to men bidding the highest. Only certain kind of men spent his money and time chasing after *mizuage* because the high price of it. Usually geisha expected the price of *mizuage* to go as high as it could. The price of *mizuage* were various from ¥ 7000 to ¥ 11,500. Such amount of money was high in the period of World War II.

*Mameha’s mizuage in 1929 actually cost more than mine in 1935, even though mine was ¥ 11,500 while mameha was more like ¥ 7000 and ¥ 8000. (Golden 1997, 279)*

Men competed with others chasing after *mizuage*. Only the men with highest pay were entitled to such *mizuage*. Narrated in this novel, Baron and Doctor Crab, an American competed in chasing after the *mizuage* of Sayuri. In the end, Doctor Crab won the competition and agreed to pay her ¥ 11,500.

*Baron said to her. “I am trying with to arrange a mizuage, but a certain annoying doctor keeps getting in my way. Only one man can be the explorer of an undiscovered region, and I want to be that man but what am I to do/ this foolish doctor doesn’t seem to understand that the numbers he throws about represent real money!”* (Golden 1997, 278)

Up to that time, ¥ 11,500 was the highest amount ever paid for a *mizuage* in Gion, and possibly in any of the geisha districts in Japan. Such price was the equal amount of a laborer might have earned in a year and the fee of Sayuri’s *mizuage* is more than enough to repay all her debts to the okiya, a tea house where she served as a geisha.

*In the end, Dr. Crab agreed to pay ¥ 11,500 for my mizuage. Up to this time, this was the highest ever paid for a mizuage in Gion, and possibly in any of the Geisha districts in Japan. Keep in mind that in those days, one hour of geisha’s time cost about ¥4, and an extravagant kimono might have sold for ¥1500. So it may not sound like a lot, but it’s much more than, say, a laborer might have earned in a year. (Golden1997, 279)*

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33 very wealthy man
Despite earning a fantastic amount of money, Sayuri didn’t feel pleasure and comfortable during the process of *mizuage*. Of course, a *mizuage* often involved a certain amount of blood because the hymens frequently torn. As narrated in this novel that she felt no more pleasure there than if someone whom she did not love at all have her in a sexual intercourse and rubbed over against and inside of her thigh until she bleed, it might have been said that was a kind of sexual harassment.

The doctor’s hands burrowed around for a while, making me very uncomfortable in much the same way as the young silver-haired doctor had a few weeks earlier. Then he lowered himself until his body was poised just above mine. I put all the force of my mind to work in making a sort of mental barrier between the Doctor and me, but it wasn’t enough to keep me from feeling the Doctor’s ee.I

Finally the homeless eel marked its territory, I suppose, and the Doctor lay heavily upon me, moist and sweat. I didn’t at all like being so close to him, so I pretended to have trouble in the hopes he would take his weight off me.

(Golden 1997, 279)

In addition, the discussion regarding geisha represented as sex commodity could be observed through a man’s involvement becoming her *danna*. Danna refers to wealthy man taking a role as husband for geisha who pays all geisha’s living expenses every month. Sayuri retold Mameha’s explanation furthermore what *danna* meant:

> I’d already been in Gion long enough to know something of what Mameha meant by danna. It’s the term a wife uses for her husband—or rather, it was in my day. But a geisha who refers to her danna isn’t talking about a husband. Geisha never marry. Or at least those who do not longer continue as geisha.

(Golden 1997, 147)

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34 To become a *danna* for a geisha, a man must accomplish several processes. This man not only must be very wealthy, but he must be investigated and also undergo negotiations and inquiries. When these negotiations go successfully, a ceremony will be conducted. Usually the bond between a geisha and her *danna* will last for six months or longer. After such process of investigation and negotiation a *danna* will be obliged to pay all a geisha’s living expenses every month. Including geisha’s daily need, clothing, make-up, training fees, medical expense and so forth. And he will be entitled to certain privileges from a geisha.
One of income source for geisha was by having a *danna*, because he was the one a geisha relied on to pay all her living expenses. On the contrary, it would be hard for a geisha whose no *danna* to support her life. It was supported by this part of paragraph in this novel;

*Parties and so on are all very nice; but the real money in Gion comes from having a danna, and a geisha without one-such as Hatsumomo-is like a stray cat on the street without a master to feed it.* (Golden 1997, 148)

The following paragraphs sentences are the detailed explanation about *danna*;

*The terms of the arrangement will probably oblige the danna to pay off a portion of the geisha’s debt and cover many of her living expenses every month—such as the cost of her makeup and perhaps a portion of the her lesson fees, and maybe her medical expenses as well. Things of that sort. Despite all these extravagant expenses, he’ll still continue to pay her usual hourly fee whenever he spends time with her, just as her other customers do. But he’s also entitled to certain “privileges.”* (Golden 1997, 148)

Another evidence that geisha are represented as sex commodity could be viewed from a part of paragraph of this novel. Once a man was interested in a geisha, he could ‘buy’ her for one or longer nights under a certain condition, there ought to be an agreement between this man and the geisha.

*So, you see, a geisha of the first or second tier in Gion can’t be bought for a single night, not by anyone. But if the right sort of man is interested in something else—not a night together, but a much longer time—and if he’s willing to offer suitable terms, well, in that case a geisha will be happy to accept such an arrangement.* (Golden 1997, 148)

The explanation about *mizuage* and *danna* reflects that geisha, despite all the representations as respectable artists, well-trained entertainer and performers, highly paid entertainers, women with good comportment and behavior, and the representation as the exotic women, they were also the representation of sex commodity. It could be proven that physical appearances besides their remarkable art skills were potentially sold with remarkable high price and only very wealthy men could afford to ‘purchase’ them.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. CONCLUSION

Based on the previous analyzes, the writer could draw a conclusion that it is obvious in Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*, geisha are remarkably represented as the talented and literate persons by having art skill, well-trained and highly paid entertainer, women with good behavior, however, despite all the representation they are represented as erotic, exotic and sex commodity.

The representation of geisha as the respectable professional entertainers could be inferred by the explanation that those geisha were required to possess qualifications of high intelligence and wide knowledge by accomplishing a number of hard, complicated and challenging rituals which common people would find it very hard to accomplish, but Sayuri and other geisha did. It is proven by their talent in mastering several kinds of Japanese arts such as playing many Japanese musical instruments which were considered hard to master by ordinary people. In addition, they were also required to possess good behavior showed by respecting others in their way by bowing, kneeling and greeting in respect manner. In order to be such professional geisha, they did not come by their own but they were trained by professional and disciplined teachers who trained them in strict way.
In the end, despite the facts that they were the real respectable and talented artists completing all hard works and hard trainings so that they were regarded as the ones to bring the good image to the world, they remained to be the representation as the sex commodity. It could be proven that through the process of mizuage in which their most valuable worth, virginity were sold to men could afford to buy. In addition, to support the idea that geisha are represented as the sex commodity could be inferred by danna who act as husband for those geisha who pay all geisha expenses.

By learning the facts about geisha through their physical appearances besides their remarkable art skills were potentially sold with remarkable high price and only very wealthy men could afford to ‘purchase’ them, the writer considers that these explanations figure out what the representations of geisha exactly are.

B. SUGGESTIONS

From the analysis and the conclusion above, the writer would like to suggest that in analyzing a novel as the writer has done; readers could use the theory of representation in order to be able to figure out exactly how the characters of the novels are represented by learning the character’s physical appearance, behaviors and their interaction with other characters. Some efforts should be done such as reading credible sources, collecting data before analyzing it deeper in order to gain an outstanding result.

Giles, Judy and Middleton Tim. *Studying Culture*, Unknown city, publisher and year.


http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/


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Biodata

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LIST OF APPENDICES

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Geisha

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This article is about the female Japanese entertainer. For the Chinese elm variety, see Ulmus parvifolia 'Geisha'.

Typical nape make-up

Geisha (", Geiko (" or Geigi (" are traditional, female Japanese entertainers, whose skills include performing various Japanese arts, such as classical music and dance.

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Terms

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"Geisha", pronounced / ɡeɪʃə/, like all Japanese nouns, has no distinct singular or plural variants. The word consists of two kanji,  (gei) meaning "art" and  (sha) meaning "person" or "doer". The most direct translation of geisha into English would be "artist" or "performing artist". Another term used in Japan is geiko, a word from the Kyoto dialect.

Apprentice geisha are called maiko (  , lit. "dance child"). It is the maiko, with her white make-up and elaborate kimono and hairstyle, that has become the stereotype of a "geisha" to westerners, rather than the true geisha. A woman entering the geisha community does not have to start out as a maiko, having the opportunity to begin her career as a full geisha. In fact, a woman above 21 is considered too old to be a maiko and becomes a full geisha upon her initiation into the geisha community. However, those who do go through the maiko stage enjoy more prestige later in their professional lives.

Tokyo geisha generally do not follow the ritualized Kyoto maiko apprentice process. The training period can be six months to a year – notably shorter than a Kyoto maiko – before she debuts as a full geisha. The trainee is referred to as a han'gyoku (  ) or "half-jewel", or by the more generic term o-shaku (  ), lit. "one who pours (alcohol)". On average,
Tokyo geisha tend to be older than their Kyoto counterparts, many holding formal degrees from university.

[edit] Stages of training

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Traditionally, they began their training at a very young age. Although some girls were sold to geisha houses (okiya) as children, this was not common practice in reputable districts. Daughters of geisha were often brought up as geisha themselves, usually as the successor (atotori, meaning "heiress") or daughter-role (musume-bun) to the okiya.

The first stage of training was called shikomi. When girls first arrived at the okiya, they would be put to work as maids, required to do any necessary tasks. The work was difficult with the intent to "make" and "break" the new girls. The most junior shikomi of the house would have to wait late into the night for the senior geisha to return from engagements, sometimes as late as two or three in the morning. During this stage of training, the shikomi would go to classes at the hanamachi's (the geisha district's) geisha school. In modern times, this stage still exists to accustom the girls to the traditional dialect, traditions and dress of the "karyūkai."

Once the recruit became proficient with the geisha arts, and passed a final, difficult dance exam, she would be promoted to the second stage of training: minarai. Minarai are relieved of their housekeeping duties. The minarai stage focuses on training in the field. Although minarai attend ozashiki (banquets in which guests are attended by geisha), they do not participate at an advanced level. Their kimono, more elaborate than a maiko's, are intended to do the talking for them. Minarai can be hired for parties, but are usually uninvited (yet welcomed) guests at parties that their onee-san ("older sister": the Minarai's senior or mentor) attends. They charge 1/3 hanadai (fee). Minarai generally work with a particular tea house (called minarai-jaya) learning from the okaa-san (proprietress of the house). These techniques are not taught in school, as skills such as conversation and gaming can only be absorbed through practice. This stage lasts only about a month or so.

After a short period of time, the third (and most famous) stage of training began, called maiko. Maiko are apprentice geisha, and this stage can last for years. Maiko learn from their senior geisha mentor and follow them around to all their engagements. The onee-san/imouto-san (junior) relationship is important. Since the onee-san teaches her maiko everything about working in the hanamachi, her teaching is vital. She will teach her proper ways of serving tea, playing shamisen, and dancing, casual conversation and more. The onee-san will even help pick the maiko's new professional name with kanji or symbols related to her own name. Regional variations exist, as the han’gyoku of Tokyo are known for being sassy and the Kyoto maiko are known for being demure.
After a period as short as six months (in Tokyo) or as long as five years (in Kyoto), the maiko is promoted to a full-fledged geisha, and charges full price for her time. Geisha remain as such until they retire.

[edit] Modern geisha

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Modern geisha still live in traditional geisha houses called okiya in areas called hanamachi ( "flower towns"), particularly during their apprenticeship. Many experienced geisha are successful enough to choose to live independently. The elegant, high-culture world that geisha are a part of is called karyūkai ( "the flower and willow world").

Young women who wish to become geisha now most often begin their training after completing junior high school or even high school or college, with many women
beginning their careers in adulthood. Geisha still study traditional instruments like the shamisen, shakuhachi (bamboo flute), and drums, as well as traditional songs. **Japanese traditional dance, tea ceremony, literature and poetry.** By watching other geisha, and with the assistance of the owner of the geisha house, apprentices also become skilled in the complex traditions surrounding selecting and wearing kimono, and in dealing with clients.

Kyoto is considered by many to be where the geisha tradition is the strongest today, including Gion Kobu. The geisha in these districts are known as geiko. The Tokyo hanamachi of Shimbashi, Asakusa and Kagurazaka are also well known.

In modern Japan, geisha and maiko are now a rare sight outside hanamachi. In the 1920s there were over 80,000 geisha in Japan, but today there are far fewer. The exact number is unknown to outsiders, and is estimated to be from 1,000 to 2,000, mostly in the resort town of Atami. Most common are sightings of tourists who pay a fee to be dressed up as a maiko.

A sluggish economy, declining interest in the traditional arts, the exclusive nature of the flower and willow world, and the expense of being entertained by geisha have all contributed to the tradition's decline.

Geisha are often hired to attend parties and gatherings, traditionally at tea houses (ochaya) or at traditional Japanese restaurants (ryōtei). Their time is measured by the time it takes an incense stick to burn, and is called senkōdai, "incense stick fee" or gyokudai, "jewel fee"). In Kyoto the terms "ohana" and "hanadai", meaning "flower fees", are preferred. The customer makes arrangements through the geisha union office (kenban), which keeps each geisha's schedule and makes her appointments both for entertaining and for training.

**[edit] Geisha and prostitution**

There remains some confusion, even within Japan, about the nature of the geisha profession. Geisha are portrayed as prostitutes in much Western popular culture. However, geisha do not engage in paid sex with clients. Their purpose being to entertain their customer, be it by dancing, reciting verse, playing musical instruments, or engaging in light conversation. Geisha engagements may include flirting with men and playful innuendos; however, clients know that nothing more can be expected. In a social style that is common in Japan, men are amused by the illusion of that which is never to be.

Geisha have been confused with the high-class courtesans of the Edo period known as oiran, from whom they evolved. Like geisha, oiran wore elaborate hairstyles and white makeup, but oiran tied their obi in the front not, as is commonly thought, for easy removal but, according to anthropologist Liza Dalby, because that was the practice of married women at the time.
During the Edo period, prostitution was legal. Prostitutes such as the oiran worked within walled-in districts licensed by the government. In the seventeenth century, the oiran sometimes employed men called "geisha" to perform at their parties. Therefore, the first geisha were men. In the late eighteenth century, dancing women called "odoriko" and newly popular female "geisha" began entertaining men at banquets in unlicensed districts. Some were apprehended for illegal prostitution and sent to the licensed quarters, where there was a strict distinction between geisha and prostitutes, and the former were forbidden to sell sex. In contrast, "machi geisha", who worked outside the licensed districts, often engaged in illegal prostitution.

In 1872, shortly after the Meiji Restoration, the new government passed a law liberating "prostitutes (shōgi) and geisha (geigi)." The wording of this statute was the subject of controversy. Some officials thought that prostitutes and geisha worked at different ends of the same profession – selling sex – and that all prostitutes should henceforth be called "geisha". In the end, the government decided to maintain a line between the two groups, arguing that "geisha" were more refined and should not be soiled by association with prostitutes.

Also, geisha working in onsen towns such as Atami are dubbed onsen geisha. Onsen geisha have been given a bad reputation due to the prevalence of prostitutes in such towns who market themselves as 'geisha', as well as sordid rumors of dance routines like 'Shallow River' (which involves the 'dancers' lifting the skirts of their kimono higher and higher). In contrast to these 'one-night geisha', the true onsen geisha are in fact competent dancers and musicians. However, the autobiography of Sayo Masuda, an onsen geisha who worked in Nagano Prefecture in the 1930s, reveals that in the past such women were often under intense pressure to sell sex.

[edit] Personal relationships and danna

Geisha are expected to be single women; those who choose to marry must retire from the profession.

It was traditional in the past for established geisha to take a danna, or patron. A danna was typically a wealthy man, sometimes married, who had the means to support the very large expenses related to a geisha's traditional training and other costs. This sometimes occurs today as well, but very rarely.

A geisha and her danna may or may not be in love, but intimacy is never viewed as a reward for the danna's financial support. The traditional conventions and values within such a relationship are very intricate and not well understood, even by many Japanese.

While it is true that a geisha is free to pursue personal relationships with men she meets through her work, such relationships are carefully chosen and unlikely to be casual. A hanamachi tends to be a very tight-knit community and a geisha's good reputation is not taken lightly.
"Geisha girls" (pronounced gee-sha), also known as "panpan girls," were Japanese women who worked as prostitutes during the period of the Allied Occupation of Japan. They almost exclusively serviced American GIs stationed in the country. The term is a mispronunciation of the word geisha. The mispronunciation persists among some westerners.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that these women dressed in kimono and imitated the look of geisha. Americans unfamiliar with the culture of Japan did not know the difference between these costumed prostitutes and actual geisha. Shortly after their arrival in 1945, occupying American GIs are said to have congregated on the Ginza and shouted in unison "We want geesha girls!"

Eventually, the term "geisha girl" became a general word for any female Japanese prostitute or worker in the mizu shobai, and included bar hostesses and streetwalkers.

Geisha girls are speculated by researchers to be largely responsible for the continuing misconception in the West that geisha are prostitutes.

[edit] Appearance

Women posing as maiko (geisha apprentices), Kyoto, Japan wearing traditional furisode and okobo
A geisha's appearance changes throughout her career, from the girlish, heavily made up maiko, to the more sombre appearance of an older established geisha.

**[edit] Makeup**

Today, the traditional makeup of the apprentice geisha is one of their most recognizable characteristics, though established geisha generally only wear full white face makeup characteristic of maiko during special performances.

The traditional makeup of an apprentice geisha features a thick white base with red lipstick and red and black accents around the eyes and eyebrows. Originally the white base mask was made with lead, but after the discovery that it poisoned the skin and caused terrible skin and back problems for the older geisha towards the end of the Meiji Era, it was replaced with rice powder.

The application of makeup is hard to perfect and is a time-consuming process. Makeup is applied before dressing to avoid dirtying the kimono. First, a wax or oil substance, called *bintsuke-abura*, is applied to the skin. Next, white powder is mixed with water into a paste and applied with a bamboo brush starting from the neck and working upwards. The white makeup covers the face, neck, and chest, with two or three unwhitened areas (forming a "W" or "V" shape, usually a traditional "W" shape) left on the nape, to accentuate this traditionally erotic area, and a line of bare skin around the hairline, which creates the illusion of a mask.

After the foundation layer is applied, a sponge is patted all over the face, throat, chest, the nape and neck to remove excess moisture and to blend the foundation. Next the eyes and eyebrows are drawn in. Traditionally charcoal was used, but today modern cosmetics are used. The eyebrows and edges of the eyes are colored black with a thin charcoal; a maiko also applies red around her eyes.

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Further information: History of cosmetics

[edit] Dress

Rear view of a maiko in a teahouse, her richly embroidered obi clearly visible

Geisha always wear kimono. Apprentice geisha wear highly colorful kimono with extravagant obi. Always, the obi is brighter than the kimono she is wearing to give a certain exotic balance. Maiko wear the obi tied in a style called "darari" (dangling obi). Older geisha wear more subdued patterns and styles (most notably the obi tied in a simpler knot utilized by married women known as the 'taiko musubi' ( ) or "drum knot"). The sign of a prosperous okiya is having geisha not wearing a kimono more than once, meaning that those okiyas with higher economic status will have "storehouses" of sorts where kimono are stored and interchanged between geisha.

Kimono can be as many as 12 or 15 layers thick for a maiko. An apprentice geisha's kimono will have, in addition to the heavy dangling obi, pocketed sleeves called "furi" which dangle all the way to the ground. During a dance or performance, an apprentice must wrap the pocketed sleeves around her arms many times to avoid tripping.
The color, pattern, and style of kimono is also dependent on the season and the event the geisha is attending. In winter, geisha can be seen wearing a three-quarter length haori lined with hand painted silk over their kimono. Lined kimono are worn during colder seasons, and unlined kimono during the summer. A kimono can take from 2–3 years to complete, due to painting and embroidering.

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Geisha wear a flat-soled sandal, zori, outdoors, and wear only tabi (white split-toed socks) indoors. In inclement weather geisha wear raised wooden clogs, called geta. Maiko wear a special wooden clog known as okobo.

[edit] Hairstyles

The maiko Mamechiho in the Gion district of Kyoto. Notice the green pin on the mid-left called tsunagi-dango: this identifies her as a maiko of Gion kobu.

The hairstyles of geisha have varied through history. In the past, it has been common for women to wear their hair down in some periods, but up in others. During the 17th century, women began putting all their hair up again, and it is during this time that the traditional shimada hairstyle, a type of traditional chignon worn by most established geisha, developed.

There are four major types of the shimada: the taka shimada, a high chignon usually worn by young, single women; the tsubushi shimada, a more flattened chignon generally worn by older women; the uiwata, a chignon that is usually bound up with a piece of colored cotton crepe; and a style that resembles a divided peach, which is worn only by maiko. This is sometimes called "Momoware", or "Split Peach". Additional hairstyles: Ofuku, Katsuyama, Yakko-shimada, and Sakko. Maiko of Miyagawa-chō and Pontochō
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These hairstyles are decorated with elaborate haircombs and hairpins (kanzashi). In the seventeenth century and after the Meiji Restoration period, hair-combs were large and conspicuous, generally more ornate for higher-class women. Following the Meiji Restoration and into the modern era, smaller and less conspicuous hair-combs became more popular.

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- Late Chrysanthemums (Bangiku) (1958) - Dir. Mikio Naruse
• *My Geisha* (1962) - Dir. Jack Cardiff
• *The World of Geisha* (1972) - Dir. Tatsumi Kumashiro
• *In the Realm of the Senses* (1976) - Dir. Nagisa Oshima
• *American Geisha* (1986) - Dir. Lee Philips
• *Ichara Saikaku Koshoku Ichidai Otoko* (1991) - Dir. Yukio Abe
• *The Geisha House* (1999) - Dir. Kinji Fukasaku
• *Zatoichi* (2003) - Dir. Takeshi Kitano
• *Fighter in the Wind* (2004) - Dir. Yang Yun-ho
• *Wakeful Nights* (2005) - Dir. Masahiko Tsugawa
• *DOA: Dead or Alive* (2006) - Dir. Cory Yuen
• *Maiko Haaaaan!!!* (2007) - Dir. Nobuo Mizuta

[edit] Music about geisha

• "Neo Geisha" by Zeromancer on the album *Eurotrash*
• "Geisha Dreams" by Rollergirl
• "Latin Geisha" by Illya Kuriaki and the Valderramas
• "GEI-SHA" by S.K.I.N.
• "Madama Butterfly" by Giacomo Puccini
See also

- Kisaeng
- Taikomochi
- Mineko Iwasaki
- Sada Yacco
- Ichiriki Ochaya
- Memoirs of a Geisha

Notes


References

- BBC television documentary Geisha Girl. First shown on UK channel BBC Four in January 2006.


### Further reading

### Non-fiction


[edit] Fiction


[edit] External links

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Wiktionary, the free dictionary.

Wikimedia Commons has media related to: **Geisha**

• The apprentice geisha's explanation
• Photos of maiko by Naoyuki Ogino
• Photos of geisha and maiko by Lubomir Cernota
• Information on geisha and maiko from Japanlinked.com
• Immortal Geisha, a fansite
• A maiko's blog in Japanese and English
• Geisha and Maiko of Gion, photos by Francois Bergeron
• Short article on geisha from About.com
• Hakone Geisha Association—organizes geisha receptions
• Geisha and maiko photos by Frantisek Staud


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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jump to: navigation, search
This article is about the female Japanese entertainer. For the Chinese elm variety, see

Ulmus parvifolia 'Geisha'.

Typical nape make-up

Geisha (♀), Geiko (♀) or Geigi (♀) are traditional, female Japanese entertainers, whose skills include performing various Japanese arts, such as classical music and dance.

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"Geisha", pronounced /ˈɡeɪʃə/, like all Japanese nouns, has no distinct singular or plural variants. The word consists of two kanji, (gei) meaning "art" and (sha) meaning "person" or "doer". The most direct translation of geisha into English would be "artist" or "performing artist". Another term used in Japan is geiko, a word from the Kyoto dialect.

Apprentice geisha are called maiko (, lit. "dance child"). It is the maiko, with her white make-up and elaborate kimono and hairstyle, that has become the stereotype of a "geisha" to westerners, rather than the true geisha. A woman entering the geisha community does not have to start out as a maiko, having the opportunity to begin her career as a full geisha. In fact, a woman above 21 is considered too old to be a maiko and becomes a full geisha upon her initiation into the geisha community. However, those who do go through the maiko stage enjoy more prestige later in their professional lives.

Tokyo geisha generally do not follow the ritualized Kyoto maiko apprentice process. The training period can be six months to a year – notably shorter than a Kyoto maiko – before she debuts as a full geisha. The trainee is referred to as a han'gyoku (, lit. "half-jewel"), or by the more generic term o-shaku (, lit. "one who pours (alcohol)"). On average, Tokyo geisha tend to be older than their Kyoto counterparts, many holding formal degrees from university.

Stages of training

Traditionally, they began their training at a very young age. Although some girls were sold to geisha houses (okiya) as children, this was not common practice in reputable
districts. Daughters of geisha were often brought up as geisha themselves, usually as the successor (*ato-tori*, meaning "heiress") or daughter-role (*musume-bun*) to the okiya.

The first stage of training was called shikomi. When girls first arrived at the okiya, they would be put to work as maids, required to do any necessary tasks. The work was difficult with the intent to "make" and "break" the new girls. The most junior shikomi of the house would have to wait late into the night for the senior geisha to return from engagements, sometimes as late as two or three in the morning. During this stage of training, the shikomi would go to classes at the hanamachi's (the geisha district's) geisha school. In modern times, this stage still exists to accustom the girls to the traditional dialect, traditions and dress of the "karyūkai."

Once the recruit became proficient with the geisha arts, and passed a final, difficult dance exam, she would be promoted to the second stage of training: minarai. Minarai are relieved of their housekeeping duties. The minarai stage focuses on training in the field. Although minarai attend *ozashiki* (banquets in which guests are attended by geisha), they do not participate at an advanced level. Their kimono, more elaborate than a maiko's, are intended to do the talking for them. Minarai can be hired for parties, but are usually uninvited (yet welcomed) guests at parties that their onee-san ("older sister": the Minarai's senior or mentor) attends. They charge 1/3 hanadai (fee). Minarai generally work with a particular tea house (called *minarai-jaya*) learning from the *okaa-san* (*proprietress* of the house). These techniques are not taught in school, as skills such as conversation and gaming can only be absorbed through practice. This stage lasts only about a month or so.

After a short period of time, the third (and most famous) stage of training began, called maiko. Maiko are apprentice geisha, and this stage can last for years. Maiko learn from their senior geisha mentor and follow them around to all their engagements. The onee-san/imouto-san (junior) relationship is important. Since the onee-san teaches her maiko everything about working in the hanamachi, her teaching is vital. She will teach her proper ways of serving tea, playing *shamisen*, and dancing, casual conversation and more. The onee-san will even help pick the maiko's new professional name with kanji or symbols related to her own name. Regional variations exist, as the han'gyoku of Tokyo are known for being sassy and the Kyoto maiko are known for being demure.

After a period as short as six months (in Tokyo) or as long as five years (in Kyoto), the maiko is promoted to a full-fledged geisha, and charges full price for her time. Geisha remain as such until they retire.

[edit] Modern geisha

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A geiko entertaining a guest in Gion (Kyoto)

The **Gion** geiko district (hanamachi) of Kyoto, Japan.

Modern geisha still live in traditional geisha houses called *okiya* in areas called **hanamachi** ("flower towns"), particularly during their apprenticeship. Many experienced geisha are successful enough to choose to live independently. The elegant, high-culture world that geisha are a part of is called *karyūkai* ("the flower and willow world").

Young women who wish to become geisha now most often begin their training after completing **junior high school** or even **high school** or **college**, with many women beginning their careers in adulthood. Geisha still study traditional instruments like the **shamisen**, **shakuhachi** (bamboo flute), and drums, as well as traditional songs, **Japanese traditional dance**, **tea ceremony**, literature and poetry. By watching other geisha, and with the assistance of the owner of the geisha house, apprentices also become skilled in the complex traditions surrounding selecting and wearing **kimono**, and in dealing with clients.

Kyoto is considered by many to be where the geisha tradition is the strongest today, including Gion Kobu. The geisha in these districts are known as **geiko**. The Tokyo **hanamachi** of **Shimbashi**, **Asakusa** and **Kagurazaka** are also well known.
In modern Japan, geisha and maiko are now a rare sight outside hanamachi. In the 1920s there were over 80,000 geisha in Japan, but today there are far fewer. The exact number is unknown to outsiders, and is estimated to be from 1,000 to 2,000, mostly in the resort town of Atami. Most common are sightings of tourists who pay a fee to be dressed up as a maiko.

A sluggish economy, declining interest in the traditional arts, the exclusive nature of the flower and willow world, and the expense of being entertained by geisha have all contributed to the tradition's decline.

Geisha are often hired to attend parties and gatherings, traditionally at tea houses (ochaya) or at traditional Japanese restaurants (ryōtei). Their time is measured by the time it takes an incense stick to burn, and is called senkōdai ("incense stick fee") or gyokudai ("jewel fee"). In Kyoto the terms "ohana" and "hanadai", meaning "flower fees", are preferred. The customer makes arrangements through the geisha union office (kenban), which keeps each geisha's schedule and makes her appointments both for entertaining and for training.

[edit] Geisha and prostitution

There remains some confusion, even within Japan, about the nature of the geisha profession. Geisha are portrayed as prostitutes in much Western popular culture. However, geisha do not engage in paid sex with clients. Their purpose being to entertain their customer, be it by dancing, reciting verse, playing musical instruments, or engaging in light conversation. Geisha engagements may include flirting with men and playful innuendos; however, clients know that nothing more can be expected. In a social style that is common in Japan, men are amused by the illusion of that which is never to be.[1]

Geisha have been confused with the high-class courtesans of the Edo period known as oiran, from whom they evolved. Like geisha, oiran wore elaborate hairstyles and white makeup, but oiran tied their obi in the front not, as is commonly thought, for easy removal but, according to anthropologist Liza Dalby, because that was the practice of married women at the time.

During the Edo period, prostitution was legal. Prostitutes such as the oiran worked within walled-in districts licensed by the government. In the seventeenth century, the oiran sometimes employed men called "geisha" to perform at their parties. Therefore, the first geisha were men. In the late eighteenth century, dancing women called "odoriko" and newly popular female "geisha" began entertaining men at banquets in unlicensed districts. Some were apprehended for illegal prostitution and sent to the licensed quarters, where there was a strict distinction between geisha and prostitutes, and the former were forbidden to sell sex. In contrast, "machigaisha", who worked outside the licensed districts, often engaged in illegal prostitution.[2]

In 1872, shortly after the Meiji Restoration, the new government passed a law liberating "prostitutes (shōgi) and geisha (geigi)." The wording of this statute was the subject of
controversy. Some officials thought that prostitutes and geisha worked at different ends of the same profession – selling sex – and that all prostitutes should henceforth be called "geisha". In the end, the government decided to maintain a line between the two groups, arguing that "geisha" were more refined and should not be soiled by association with prostitutes.[3]

Also, geisha working in onsen towns such as Atami are dubbed onsen geisha. Onsen geisha have been given a bad reputation due to the prevalence of prostitutes in such towns who market themselves as 'geisha', as well as sordid rumors of dance routines like 'Shallow River' (which involves the 'dancers' lifting the skirts of their kimono higher and higher). In contrast to these 'one-night geisha', the true onsen geisha are in fact competent dancers and musicians. However, the autobiography of Sayo Masuda, an onsen geisha who worked in Nagano Prefecture in the 1930s, reveals that in the past such women were often under intense pressure to sell sex.[4]

[edit] Personal relationships and danna

Geisha are expected to be single women; those who choose to marry must retire from the profession.

It was traditional in the past for established geisha to take a danna, or patron. A danna was typically a wealthy man, sometimes married, who had the means to support the very large expenses related to a geisha's traditional training and other costs. This sometimes occurs today as well, but very rarely.

A geisha and her danna may or may not be in love, but intimacy is never viewed as a reward for the danna's financial support. The traditional conventions and values within such a relationship are very intricate and not well understood, even by many Japanese.

While it is true that a geisha is free to pursue personal relationships with men she meets through her work, such relationships are carefully chosen and unlikely to be casual. A hanamachi tends to be a very tight-knit community and a geisha's good reputation is not taken lightly.

[edit] "Geisha girls"

"Geisha girls" (pronounced gee-sha), also known as "panpan girls,"[5] were Japanese women who worked as prostitutes during the period of the Allied Occupation of Japan. They almost exclusively serviced American GIs stationed in the country. The term is a mispronunciation of the word geisha.[6] The mispronunciation persists among some westerners.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that these women dressed in kimono and imitated the look of geisha. Americans unfamiliar with the culture of Japan did not know the difference between these costumed prostitutes and actual geisha.[5] Shortly after their
arrival in 1945, occupying American GIs are said to have congregated on the Ginza and shouted in unison "We want geisha girls!".[7]

Eventually, the term "geisha girl" became a general word for any female Japanese prostitute or worker in the mizu shobai, and included bar hostesses and streetwalkers.[5]

Geisha girls are speculated by researchers to be largely responsible for the continuing misconception in the West that geisha are prostitutes.[5]

[edit] Appearance

Women posing as maiko (geisha apprentices), Kyoto, Japan wearing traditional furisode and okobo

A geisha's appearance changes throughout her career, from the girlish, heavily made up maiko, to the more sombre appearance of an older established geisha.

[edit] Makeup

Today, the traditional makeup of the apprentice geisha is one of their most recognizable characteristics, though established geisha generally only wear full white face makeup characteristic of maiko during special performances.

The traditional makeup of an apprentice geisha features a thick white base with red lipstick and red and black accents around the eyes and eyebrows. Originally the white
base mask was made with lead, but after the discovery that it poisoned the skin and caused terrible skin and back problems for the older geisha towards the end of the Meiji Era, it was replaced with rice powder.

The application of makeup is hard to perfect and is a time-consuming process. Makeup is applied before dressing to avoid dirtying the kimono. First, a wax or oil substance, called *bintsuke-abura*, is applied to the skin. Next, white powder is mixed with water into a paste and applied with a bamboo brush starting from the neck and working upwards. The white makeup covers the face, neck, and chest, with two or three unwhitened areas (forming a "W" or "V" shape, usually a traditional "W" shape) left on the nape, to accentuate this traditionally erotic area, and a line of bare skin around the hairline, which creates the illusion of a mask.

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- The Geisha Boy (1958) - Dir. Frank Tashlin
- Late Chrysanthemums (Bangiku) (1958) - Dir. Mikio Naruse
- My Geisha (1962) - Dir. Jack Cardiff
- The World of Geisha (1972) - Dir. Tatsumi Kumashiro
- In the Realm of the Senses (1976) - Dir. Nagisa Oshima
- American Geisha (1986) - Dir. Lee Philips
- Ihara Saikaku Koshoku Ichidai Otoko (1991) - Dir. Yukio Abe
- The Geisha House (1999) - Dir. Kinji Fukasaku
- Zatoichi (2003) - Dir. Takeshi Kitano
- Fighter in the Wind (2004) - Dir. Yang Yun-ho
- *Wakeful Nights* (2005) - Dir. Masahiko Tsugawa
- *DOA: Dead or Alive* (2006) - Dir. Cory Yuen

[edit] Music about geisha

- "Neo Geisha" by Zeromancer on the album *Eurotrash*
- "Geisha Dreams" by Rollergirl
- "Latin Geisha" by Illya Kuriaki and the Valderramas
- "GEI-SHA" by S.K.I.N.
- "Madama Butterfly" by Giacomo Puccini

[edit] See also

- Kisaeng
- Taikomochi
- Mineko Iwasaki
- Sada Yacco
- Ichiriki Ochaya
- Memoirs of a Geisha

[edit] Notes


[edit] References


• BBC television documentary Geisha Girl. First shown on UK channel BBC Four in January 2006.


[edit] Further reading

[edit] Non-fiction


### Fiction


SYNOPSIS OF THESIS

REPRESENTATION OF GEISHA IN ARTHUR GOLDEN’S NOVEL

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

CHAPTER I

A. INTRODUCTION

In carrying on the process of modernization, Japan is not only success in recovering its economic but also maintaining its culture. Japan has been maintaining the highly rooted process of tradition for hundred years. People should recognize one of thousand sub-cultures in Japan; geisha. It is one of Japanese cultural products contributing quite significant influence to Japan in the recent time.

The culture of Japan which is high dedicated, discipline and hard-working is reflected in the characteristic of geishas surviving their life. As narrated in the novel Memoirs of a Geisha written by Arthur Golden whose background between 1930-1940.

Since geisha is one of Japanese cultural product possessing a specific complexity, the tradition of geisha is well-maintained by each generation. The social status of a geisha has a special high position in the Japanese society. And it also reflects one of Japanese cultural product which is very unique and characteristic. Such tradition and culture later on reconstructed in a novel because novel is a replica reflecting the culture and civilization of a society.
In this research, the writer is going to analyze deeper the other sides of geisha in *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden by using the theory of representation. Ordinary people consider geisha simply as prostitutes serving sex to their customers. In fact, many other positive things and great qualifications including hard work, though trainings and hard rituals which common people will find it very hard to accomplish, geisha are required to possess as described in the above explanation.

Based on the background of the study, this research will be focused on the exploring of the concept of representation reflected in the main character of Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*, Sayuri and other geisha as the supporting characters. The spirit and work ethos of being discipline, hard-working, and high dedication owned by most Japans generally and the characters of the novel particularly reflects the concept of representation of a society in the period of 1930 -1940. Furthermore, through this novel, the writer is eager to analyze more deeply the representation concept found on geisha particularly Sayuri, the main character of the novel whose profession is more than a profession correlating with simply sexual interaction A geisha is required to possess qualifications of high intelligence and wide knowledge by accomplishing a number of hard, complicated and challenging rituals which common people will find it very hard to accomplish. And Japan has admitted geisha as a precious profession representing deeply rooted tradition and high social statues in Japanese society.

Based on the background of study above, the writer makes research questions as follows:

1. **How are geisha through the main character and supporting characters represented in Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha***?
2. **Why geisha in Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* are represented as the sex commodity**?
In general, this research is aimed to prove if *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden through its characters can be analyzed by using the concept of representation.

Based on the research question, it is expected to dig inspiration and motivation for the general society that hard work, high motivation, responsibility, alertness, loyalty, discipline, dedication, and dignity and the other spiritual senses as represented by Sayuri, the main character in the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden are required factors to gain success in life.

**B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology includes several important aspects of a research such as method of the research, objective of the research, technique of data analysis, the unit of analysis and place and time of the research:

Concerning with the Method of the Research, the writer uses the qualitative method. The qualitative method basically aims to observe people in their environment, to interact with them, to understand their language and interpretation concerning their environment (Nasution, 1988:5). In this research, the writer observes the people and their culture.

Since the writer uses the qualitative method, the data which taken are complete, deeper, credible and meaningful so that the objective of the research can be obtained. In addition, by using the qualitative method she could dig the empirical and measured facts. The facts which are abstract and unreachable by human sense will be very difficult to be explored. By using the qualitative method, the writer is able to obtain the complete data and the data has the high credibility.

Meanwhile, regarding with the Objective of the Research, In general, this research is aimed to prove if novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden is feasible to be analyzed using the concept of representation. Meanwhile the specific
objective is to explore more deeply if the main character and other characters of the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden can also be analyzed using such concept.

Based on those research questions, it is expected to dig inspiration and motivation for the general society that hard work, high motivation, responsibility, alertness, loyalty, discipline, dedication, and dignity and the other spiritual senses as represented by Sayuri, the main character and other supporting characters in the novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden are required factors to gain success in life.

For the technique of data analysis, the collected data uses a number of sources concerning the concept of representation. The research began by analyzing Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*. Furthermore, the research continued on finding related theories from several experts such as Judy Giles, Timothy Dalton, Richard Dyer and Stuart Hall. Those data are absolutely useful to dig deeply the concept of representation reflected on Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*. The further analysis is to find the philosophical values concerning with the ethos and spirit of geisha on this novel in order to shape the concept of representation.

For the unit analysis in this research is a novel *Memoirs of a Geisha* written by Arthur Golden published in 1997 by Vintage, London. The novel narrates the struggles of the main character of the novel, Sayuri and other characters of becoming and maintaining their profession as geisha which are represented in several topics.

This research has taken place since May 2008 and been finished in June 2009 in English Letters Department, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, States Islamic University *Syarif Hidayatullah* Jakarta. The research includes preparing, collecting, analyzing data and organizing the paper.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In analyzing Arthur Golden’s novel ‘Memoirs of a Geisha’, the writer uses the theory of representation based on the thoughts of Judy Giles and Timothy Middleton as written on their book *Studying Culture*. In addition, the writer also uses the thought of Stuart Hall and other philosophers to support the writer’s finding.

Representation describes the signs that stand in for and take the place of something else. It is through representation people know and understand the world and reality through the act of naming it. Signs are manipulated in order to make sense of the world.

Meanwhile, according to Giles, Representation is one of the key practices by which meanings are produces. There are three possible senses to the world ‘represent’:

1. To ‘represent’ meaning **to stand in for**, as in the case of a country’s flag, which when flown at a sporting event, for example signals that country’s presence at the event. The flag stands for or symbolizes a nation, distinguishing France and China, or Ireland from USA. In Britain, the royal stands for or represents /symbolizes the royal family and the institution of monarchy.

2. To ‘represent’ meaning **to speak or act on behalf of**, as in the sentence ‘A spokesperson on behalf of lesbian mothers voiced the concerns of the group on television. Members of Parliament represent the concern of their constituents. A person who represents a group in this sense may also serve a symbolic function. An example might be the Pope, who speaks and acts on behalf of the Roman Catholic community but might also stand as a symbol of Roman Catholicism.
3. To ‘represent’ meaning to re-present. In this sense, a biography or historical writing to represent the event of the past. Equally, a photograph re-presents a moment or event which has already occurred—it represents the occasion again. A photograph of painting can also, of course, represent someone or something in the sense of standing in for. Posters of rock stars, religious paintings and public statues all fulfill this function. Images that function in this way are said to be iconic.

Among those concepts of representation, the writer tend to use the third representation as defined by Judy Giles and Timothy Dalton as the most suitable concept to support this thesis, since to represent here means to represent event of the past. Novel Memoirs of a Geisha tells reader about something happened in the past as experienced by geisha as the characters in this novel in 1930’s and 1940’s. It coincidently occurred at World War II when America invaded Japan.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH FINDING

In analyzing the representation of geisha, the writer will present the discussion into several topics; The representation of geisha as the respectable and artistic women, highly paid entertainer and performers, well-trained entertainers, women with good comportment and behavior and exotic women. Despite such presentations, geisha are also represented as sex commodity.

The representation will be discussed by using the data from the character’s physical appearance, behaviors and their interaction with other characters.

1. The Representation of Geisha as Artistic Women

In *memoirs of a geisha*, geisha are represented as artistic women. Artistic refers to having or revealing creative skill, relating to or characteristic of art or artists, aesthetically pleasing. As the word *geisha* itself stands for ‘artisan’ or ‘artist‘, a geisha is an entertainer and performer.

As artists and entertainers, geisha are required to master several artworks such as dancing, singing, playing many musical instruments, reading poems, arranging flowers even presenting tea ceremony or what it is called *chado*. However, dancing is the most important art skill geisha must master well.

In several occasions such as an evening banquet of a hotel, geisha usually dance; they should be masterful in any movements and dance as attractively as they could. And in another occasion they are singers.

Not only dancing, in this novel, geisha are described as women who are able to play variety of musical instrument such as *shamisen*, a three-string guitar, Japanese flute, *okawa*, *taiko* and *tsutsumi*. 
In addition to dancing and playing musical instrument, in this novel they are also described as the representation of artistic women who are able to sing many different types of songs such as popular ballads, songs of kabuki theaters and songs of musical poems.

Not only dancing, performing musical instrument and singing, a geisha must also possess skill of performing a cadou, Japanese tea ceremony. It isn’t unusual for a party at a private residence to begin with a brief tea ceremony. Usually, geisha make the tea and serve it to guests who come to see the seasonal dances in Gion (district of okiya, a teahouse where geisha belong to).

Instead of the explanation above regarding the representation of geisha as entertainers or artist, this novel narrates that most geisha are also talented of posing as models for famous big companies as experienced by Sayuri when she modeled for Sumitomo bank in Osaka. It was such a glamorous experience.

2. The Representation of Geisha as Highly Paid Entertainer and Performer

Since most geisha possessing high skill in entertainment, it would be an underatement to say that a geisha becomes famous and highly paid. A great number of highly paid jobs easily come to such geisha.

They were in big demands. In the early 1920’s, the great number of big companies in Japan featured them as their model of advertisement advertised the image of the companies such as the Japan Travel Bureau featured one of geisha, Mameha, a famous apprentice geisha in the early 1920’s for its first international advertising campaign.

What make geisha were highly paid is that they served numbers of the world’s important persons visiting Japan including several head of states, prime ministers,
aristocrats, writers, best comedians, politicians and luminaries. These world’s important persons attend the artistic performance of geisha. As sayuri described about her senior, Mameha, one of famous geisha at her time whose good luck of experiencing to serve these world’s important persons.

3. **The Representation of Geisha as the Well-Trained Entertainers**

As explained previously concerning the professionalism of being a geisha, a geisha had some obligations including attending school or training to support their career as entertainers. There were two steps in becoming well trainee;

3. **Formal education** where geisha ought to attend the school where they learnt arts such as dancing kabuki, singing ballad songs, playing several Japanese traditional musical instruments, arranging flower and presenting tea ceremony from expert teachers.

4. **Informal education** where they learnt how to behave and interact with others from their seniors since geisha are represented as the persons to bring good image to the world

Narrated in this novel, both trainings and teachers were very strict so that it caused geisha feeling quite depressed and afraid of making mistake in accomplishing the training. Their teachers would absolutely punish them physically when they did mistake.

Discipline was also strictly applied during training. Students weren’t strictly allowed to be late for school; otherwise, their teachers would be very furious and would not allow them to join the training as punishment. Geisha, prior to presenting an art performance, they were required to practice harder in order to present the best performance for their audience.

The last lesson of all trainings was presenting a tea ceremony. As explained in the previous sub unit that tea ceremony was a very important part of a geisha’s training. It was not unusual for a party at a private residence to begin with a brief tea ceremony.
And the guests who came to see the seasonal dances in Gion, geisha district, were first served tea made by geisha.

The impact of describing the learning process in detail to the representation of geisha is a knowledge reader should notice that it is not easy to become geisha. They must accomplish numerous complicated trainings.

Not only in such school explained above where geisha ought to learn from their teachers but they also learnt from their seniors which were considered as the expert ones. Senior geisha had important role in tutoring them by the time the young geisha were finally ready to make their debut as apprentice.

As part of training to lead a geisha to become professional, senior geisha might be the central figure for the young geisha, she taught her junior many things concerning satisfying their guest including the proper way in entertaining their guests, what the young geisha should have and should have not do toward their guests. Even the small thing personally that a young geisha should have learnt such as adjusting their make up and dress, and also what the young geisha should have and should not have done.

Senior geisha beared pretty great responsibility in guiding her apprentice in order to keep her own reputation including keeping her apprentice to have good behavior toward her customers and it was aimed to make benefit her finance to support her living cost. It was described in the novel that taking on the role of older sister often felt about like carrying a sack of rice back and forth across the city. Because not only was a younger sister as dependent on her older sister as a passenger is on the train she rode; but when the geisha behaved badly, it was her older sister who ought to responsibility. Senior geisha also had responsibility in introducing and promoting her junior to customers. She encouraged her junior to attract them. In this way, the customers would pay high fees to spend the evening chatting with the junior geisha. Furthermore this customer probably would not summon the junior geisha on his next visit.
An apprentice geisha would be guaranteed by her senior (her older sister) to be famous in the city. Afterward, the apprentice geisha ought to work hard to become a distinguished dancer.

Since geisha is represented as women bringing a good image, they were required to possess good manner; they were trained in behaving properly toward others such as in bowing, kneeling and talking. Bowing, kneeling and talking properly are considered to be the way to show their respect to others.

Their teachers always insisted them on having good manner, bearing their students in behaving, speaking and maintaining their appearance. These geisha were required to behave properly and speak the most proper language.

A geisha must be very careful about the image she presents to the world. Since she is represented as the woman with good comportment. The effect is she must keep her manner well toward anyone unconditionally. And Sayuri, as an apprentice geisha tried hard and didn’t give up accomplishing such training. She obeyed whatever her senior, Mameha had ordered her to do.

Greeting and the way of walking were part of manners geisha were supposed to do especially for the younger to the elder. Usually the younger stopped their walk, afterward bowing and greeting the elder in order to show their respect.

4. The Representation of Geisha as the Person with Good Comportment and Behavior

In this novel, despite the fact that geisha are represented as the real entertainment mastering various art skills, they are also represented as the women with good behavior. As geisha were required to be professional in anything she did they ought to have good comportment and behavior. They were said to bring a good image to the world. They were required to keep dignity and modesty representing the Japanese.
Bowing and kneeling were regarded as the way to respect others, anyone in any way, unconditionally. And geisha did it.

5. The Representation of Geisha as exotic women

'Exotic' in general means foreign, it can also mean seductive, mysterious and desirable. Meanwhile, exotic can be defined as intriguingly unusual or different, like foreign, but in an alluring way.

In this novel, their exoticism is reflected by their appearance such as their make up, dressing and hair style so that make them different from any other ordinary people. The following are the appearances which made them definitely different causing others perplexed to see them in such peculiar looking with extraordinary make up, dressing and hairstyle.

They became the center of attention in public areas which are numerous walks of life crowded in this university; both Japanese and foreigners were there. These people were attracted because of these geisha put on their make up. And they became foreign because they applied several things to their face. Even though this was the way a geisha beautify themselves. Some people thought it differently.

That is the way geisha dressed, arranged their hairstyles and make up; looked exotic, marvelous, glamorous so that it was considered strange and different from the ordinary women did. All were aimed to attract men.

6. The Representation of Geisha as Women with Glamour and Luxury

As it was explained previously that geisha were highly paid for their job and the effect of this high pay was the way they did in their life, glamour and luxury. Since they were highly distinguished entertainers and performers, it can be taken an inference that their customers were also some famous and highly distinguished customers including head states, prime ministers, aristocrats, famous authors, famous comedians, millionaires,
distinguished interpreters and so forth as described in this novel. Not all people except the extraordinary one could enjoy such luxury in Japan in the period of World War II in Japan, but geisha could. After their hard work, Geisha enjoyed their life of all luxury offered by their customers.

Sayuri who later on became a very successful and adored geisha after her decision moving to New York. In New York, she lived in a very luxurious apartment, the Waldorf Towers. She established her own okiya or teahouse serving Japanese businessmen and politicians traveling to the United States. She spent many remarkable days in many fabulous places from Hawaii, continued to Los Angeles and finally to New York. She explored United States. In US, she settled at a luxurious hotel, the Waldorf Astoria Hotel and later on moving to a very luxurious apartment, the Waldorf Towers and spending times enjoying luxuries life.

Living in New York had brought her into an amazing experience she had never imagined before. She involved herself into a high-class lifestyle by attending several prestigious places such as museums and restaurants in New York and engaging some activities which high-class people usually did and met several very important persons.

In New York, Sayuri established her own okiya or teahouse serving many very important persons such as Japanese businessmen and politicians traveling to the United States. And the teahouse she run in New York City gained the success.

She enjoyed her life with all luxuries and prestige which she gained through all hardship, struggle, high motivation and great willingness to release all oppression and harassment. She fought strongly for her freedom against tragic fate of the cruel life. Eventually, all misery and suffering became a successful conclusion.
7. The Representation of Geisha as the sex commodity

Geisha are represented as sex commodity. On several occasions, people often considered them not as entertainers but as sex commodity. Narrated in this novel, Sayuri, later on moved to New York. On an event party, she was introduced to several Americans. In the thought of most Americans, geisha was the representation of prostitutes instead of entertainers and performers.

Regardless of the explanation in the previous paragraph, in the world of geisha, it was known mizuage. Of all the important moments in the life of a geisha, mizuage certainly ranked as high as any. Referring to Mameha explanation to Sayuri asking about the meaning of mizuage that it was the first time a woman’s virginity was explored by a man. And there was a process for a man in winning mizuage.

Geisha’ virginity was in auction for the first time to men bidding the highest. Only certain kind of men spent his money and time chasing after mizuage because the high price of it. Usually geisha expected the price of mizuage to go as high as it could. The price of mizuage were various from ¥ 7000 to ¥ 11,500. Such amount of money was high in the period of World War II.

Up to that time, ¥ 11,500 was the highest amount ever paid for a mizuage in Gion, and possibly in any of the geisha districts in Japan. Such price was the equal amount of a laborer might have earned in a year and the fee of Sayuri’s mizuage is more than enough to repay all her debts to the okiya, a tea house where she served as a geisha.

In addition, the discussion regarding geisha represented as sex commodity could be observed through a man’s involvement becoming her danna.. Danna refers to wealthy man taking a role as husband for geisha who pays all geisha’s living expenses every month.
One of income source for geisha was by having a *danna*, because he was the one a geisha relied on to pay all her living expenses. On the contrary, it would be hard for a geisha whose no *danna* to support her life.

Another evidence that geisha are represented as sex commodity could be viewed from a part of paragraph of this novel. Once a man was interested in a geisha, he could ‘buy’ her for one or longer nights under a certain condition, there ought to be an agreement between this man and the geisha.

The explanation about *mizuage* and *danna* reflects that geisha, despite all the representations as respectable artists, well-trained entertainer and performers, highly paid entertainers, women with good comportment and behavior, and the representation as the exotic women, they were also the representation of sex commodity. It could be proven that physical appearances besides their remarkable art skills were potentially sold with remarkable high price and only very wealthy men could afford to ‘purchase’ them.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION

Based on the previous analyzes, the writer could draw a conclusion that it is obvious in Arthur Golden’s novel *Memoirs of a Geisha*, geisha are remarkably represented as the talented and literate persons by having art skill, well-trained and highly paid entertainer, women with good behavior, however, despite all the representation they are represented as erotic, exotic and sex commodity.

The representation of geisha as the respectable professional entertainers could be inferred by the explanation that those geisha were required to possess qualifications of high intelligence and wide knowledge by accomplishing a number of hard, complicated and challenging rituals which common people would find it very hard to accomplish, but Sayuri and other geisha did. It is proven by their talent in mastering several kinds of Japanese arts such as playing many Japanese musical instruments which were considered hard to master by ordinary people. In addition, they were also required to possess good behavior showed by respecting others in their way by bowing, kneeling and greeting in respect manner. In order to be such professional geisha, they did not come by their own but they were trained by professional and disciplined teachers who trained them in strict way.

In the end, despite the facts that they were the real respectable and talented artists completing all hard works and hard trainings so that they were regarded as the ones to bring the good image to the world, they remained to be the representation as the sex commodity. It could be proven that through the process of *mizuage* in which their most valuable worth, virginity were sold to men could afford to buy. In addition, to support the idea that geisha are represented as the sex commodity could be inferred by *danna* who act as *husband* for those geisha who pay all geisha expenses.

By learning the facts about geisha through their physical appearances besides their remarkable art skills were potentially sold with remarkable high price and only very wealthy men could afford to ‘purchase’ them, the writer considers that these explanations figure out what the representations of geisha exactly are.
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BIODATA

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