

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Orientalizing Japanese Culture as the 'Other' in Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English**

By

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This thesis entitled “**Orientalizing Japanese Culture as the ‘Other’ in Arthur Golden’s *Memoirs of a Geisha***” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by **Ram Bahadur Pun** has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. **Ram Bahadur Pun** has completed his thesis entitled “**Orientalizing Japanese Culture as the ‘Other’ in Arthur Golden’s *Memoirs of a Geisha***” under my supervision. He carried out his research from 12 August 2007 to 12 August 2008. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voice.

(Rajendra Kumar Panthee)

Supervisor

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Abstract

The thesis, with the scrupulous illustration of many stereotypical images prevailing in the text, attempts to reveal whether the text holds the evidences enough to support the hypothesis assumed by the present study. The text consists of many evidences which clarify that Arthur Golden is an Orientalist who values Western norms over Eastern one. Indeed, the writer has used the aforementioned images to create a negative portrayal of Japanese geisha culture by accepting the mainstream Western culture as 'self'. Being a Western writer, it is his instinct that forces him to define mainstream American in a positive light as the civilized, rational, advanced and modern, whereas Japanese in a negative aspect as uncivilized, backward and traditional. Presenting himself the Western devotee he claims his work to be historical though there are several exaggerations about Japan and Japanese culture and customs. The reason for this is none other than pleasing Western readers who always hunt for Easterner's mockery and damnation. Certainly, Golden has not written this novel to depict Japanese reality, but rather to present Japan and Japanese culture as inferior, exotic and 'other' so that they could feel proud to be Americans which provide a good license to impose their hegemony over the Japanese culture.

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