

# EVOLUTION OF THE TRADITIONALLY STEREOTYPICAL TERM *GEISHA* IN CONTEMPORARY FRENCH NEWSPAPERS

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## Introduction

This paper analyzes how one of the most famous and traditionally stereotypical terms about Japan, *geisha*, is represented in contemporary French media.

The French dictionary *Le Robert dictionnaire historique de la langue française* indicates that the term *geisha* as “firstly gallicized as *guécha* (1887, Loti) and it was rewritten as *geisha* (1889) according to the transliteration of the Japanese word”, the term *geisha* is traditionally known in France.

The book *Idées reçues: Le Japon (Fixed ideas: Japan)* indicates that “a woman is submissive to men and to her husband,” which is one of the famous fixed ideas, regarding Japan. Japan of the Japanese also shows that “the Japanese woman makes one part of our phantasm to the Orient. To the sensuality of oriental women, she adds submission to the desire of a man” (Pons et al. 2002: 69-70). Japanese women have often been described as the embodiment of the “Orient as phantasm,” the most famous representative of which is the *geisha*. The *clichés* about the *geisha* always remain (ibid.). Patrick Beillevaire also indicated that:

...for more than a century, the woman has been the major topic in writings about Japan. In the opinion of many visitors of the Meiji period, the charm

of her personality compensates the physique which usually receives only derogatory comments, and which is expressed as disappointment in relation to the evocations of Japonism (Beillevaire 1994: 98).

After the economic bubble burst in the 1990s, the items of Japanese popular culture, such as the *manga*, started to be appreciated by people all over the world. In addition, *Japonaises, la révolution douce* (*The Japanese, the soft revolution*), written by Garrigue (2000), indicates that the place the women occupy in the society has radically evolved in this period<sup>1</sup>.

The question of the research is as follows: how was the traditional term *geisha* used in some French newspapers published in 1995, 2000, and 2005, in the period when many countries have a new image of Japan and Japanese women? The results are compared with my previous analysis about the *geisha* in Lithuanian newspapers published during the same period. This comparison allows us to note how the usage of the traditionally stereotypical term *geisha* is influenced by social context.

### **Analytic method and procedure**

The French discourse analysis approach was used in order to examine the term *geisha*. Maingueneau (2002) defines discourse as “the whole of the produced texts and the system permitting to produce them;” discourse is “a trace of an act of socio-historically determined communication” (Maingueneau 2002: 186) and it justifies the framework as “*the Knowledge*,” “*the Literature*,” “*the Philosophy*” and “*the Publicity*,” while these frames also legitimate each discourse. He also indicates that the purpose of discourse analysis is to “think about the device of enunciation which relates the textual organization

<sup>1</sup> She indicates this evolution as follows: Japanese women are “more hedonistic and preoccupied with themselves, more open to the internationality; the revision of the law on the equality of sexes in employment in 1986 started being enforced in April, 1999; the law allows women to work at night, to work overtime, claims that there is no distinction between the posts which men or women can occupy. What concerns contraception, forty years after the women in the United States, the Japanese finally obtained the right to get the pill in 1999; in early 1990s it was confirmed that a Japanese woman has a status as a consumer, setting new trends and leading consumer movements. Since the 1980s, the life style of women has taken precedence over that of men; women are also opinion leaders, concerning the environment and consumer rights. They have formed groups to promote healthy food and waste management; however, women also experience unemployment and insecurity at work related to the economic crisis” (11-16).

and the determined social place” (ibid.: 43). That is, this method aims at examining the processes of constructing and communicating the “events” that happen in a public domain through discourse determined by the institution of the given period and society, and legitimating this “institution” through the “events” constructed and communicated by the discourse.

This study examines how the concept *geisha* is constructed and communicated in the discourse of some representative contemporary French newspapers when a new image of Japan and Japanese women has spread and how the images of Japanese women are justified through the term *geisha* constructed and communicated by the discourse.

### **Corpus of the research**

The corpus of the research is composed of the articles of representative French national newspapers published in 1995, 2000, and 2005 in which the term *geisha* appeared: *Libération*, *Le Monde*, and *Le Figaro*. *Libération* is a left-wing newspaper, published since 1973; *Le Monde* as a centre-left one published since 1944, and *Le Figaro* as a conservative one published since 1854. The reasons why this research period was chosen is not only because it is the “new period” for Japan, as it has been mentioned in the introduction, but also because this research aims at comparing this research with the previous one “Images of Japanese Women in Lithuanian Newspaper in 1995, 2000, and 2005.” In order to research the role of social context, which influences the emergence of the term *geisha* in the two countries, other conditions, such as the period and the character of media are considered as identical.

### **The notions of a stereotype and a fixed idea**

A stereotype is “a collective simplified and fixed representation or image of the beings or the things that we inherited from our culture.” Amossy (1999) has noted that it is an abstract scheme constructed by the reader from various “indirect, scattered or incomplete” data (Amossy 1999: 33). The stereotypes possess a repetitive character when we speak about a certain category generally (for example, the Japanese, the women, the rich) and about their sub-categories (for example, the fashion of Japanese women, Japanese politics, Japanese art, etc.).

A stereotype is actualized through the *cliché* on the one hand, which is a “group of the words that is possible to take from text materially” (Amossy 1991: 33). On the other hand, a stereotypeme refers to “specific features directly related to the category of a stereotype” (Rambon 2001: 196).

A fixed idea is related “to the opinion and the way of assertion” (Amossy et al. 2000: 24) and registered as “judgments, beliefs and ways of doing or saying in the formulation that is presented as a certified report of obviousness and a categorical affirmation (cf. a watch—a watch is good only if it comes from Genève)” (ibid. or cf. Paris is the center of the fashion world). The fixed ideas relate “the mechanism of acceptance of the authority” (op. cit.: 47) and the “call to individual judgment” (op. cit.: 24). The persuasion in the argumentation doesn’t have to be based only on the “validity of logic scheme (platitude),” but also on “the evaluation of the content of propositions.”

The concept *geisha* is perceived in terms of the notions mentioned above. It is used to designate one idea or one representation, or to construct a fixed idea that a *geisha* is the most submissive woman in the world and thus a stereotype may be formulated: Japanese women are obedient. The *cliché* of this stereotype is the following: a *geisha* is submissive to her client, while a stereotypeme that Japanese women are obedient, submissive, mysterious, *geisha*, etc. may also be put forward. *Geisha* could be considered as one of stereotypemes of the stereotype “Japanese women are submissive to men.” But in comparison to other stereotypemes “obedient,” “submissive,” which one can find in other societies, the usage of the term *geisha* in the sense of a “Japanese hostess trained to entertain men with conversation, dance and song” (*ODE*), can be found only in Japan.

So what status does the term *geisha* have in French media?

### **The notions of the loan word, the xenism and the peregrinism<sup>2</sup>**

According to *Dictionnaire de linguistique (Dictionary of Linguistics)*, a xenism is a lexical unit made up of a word in a foreign language which designates a reality peculiar to the culture of a speaker of this language. A xenism is the first

<sup>2</sup> The author also refers to the article by Sarah Leroy “Glasnost et perestroïka—Les peregrinations de deux russismes dans la presse française” (in *Mots* n° 82 edited by Agnès Steuckardt and Jean-Paul Honoré), which provided me a significant reflection.

stage of a loan word. (...) The distinctions between a xenism, a peregrinism, and a loan word allow us to take into account the usage of certain words: a xenism is a foreign word mentioned with reference to a linguistic code of origin and to foreign realities. A peregrinism reflects foreign realities, but its meaning is understood by the interlocutor. It can be said that “perestroika” is an example of the two stages of a xenism and of a peregrinism without becoming a loan word; the denoted political process did not lose its reference to the URSS.<sup>3</sup>

Is the term *geisha* used as a loan word, a xenism, or a peregrinism in French newspapers?

### Content of corpus structure

The content of corpus is as follows:

Newspaper		Date	Title of the article where the term geisha appeared
<i>Le Monde</i>	1	03/03/95	Fifty-eight millions of the Japanese adopted karaoke.
	2	21/08/00	Furious dog
	3	07/10/00	STYLES The fashion in the capital: tendency phenomenon
	4	12/10/00	PRÊT-À-PORTER spring-summer 2001 Sex Planet
	5	25/02/05	Women's fashion, beauty, and natural brilliance
<i>Libération</i>	6	29/01/00	Tendancies. Style. And meanwhile, Agatha Ruiz of Prada, child of la Movida, resists
	7	07/11/00	GUIDE
	8	21/04/05	... seen by you, reader. Are you rather a corona or a sumo?
	9	05/07/05	J-1: Summit of G8 of Gleneagles in Scotland
	10	01/10/05	Rap in Paris, a picturesque pioneer of the hip-pop culture
<i>Le Figaro</i>	11	11/05/00	Life today: women's style
	12	28/06/00	In Italian style: the good affairs, it is not a comedy...rather the art
	13	31/08/00	Critics: AMÉLIE NOTHOMB, Japonaiseries
	14	03/10/00	Fate: Unbelievable adventure of a Japanese billionaire Sonoko Suzuki, “the queen of the white beauty”
	15	07/11/00	Purple: the symbol of opulence and luxury; red colours the fashion and the art. The fashion looks red.
	16	22/11/00	Cinema, heads of publicity of “Charlie and her funny ladies”
	17	08/02/05	Coups de coeur
	18	10/02/05	EXPO Until March 26, La Samaritaine put in scene Japanese furniture, objects and gadgets.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Debois, *Dictionnaire de linguistique*, Paris, Larousse, 2001, p. 512.

20	25/03/05	Ura Nihon, the back of Japan
21	09/06/05	Pronuptia visits the geisha again.
23	10/11/05	Madonna: metamorphoses of the animal of fashion

The term *geisha* is not taken as an object of the study if it appeared as a real character in films and novels or as the name of a product; i.e., the term *geisha* is studied if it is used by the journalist himself/herself. According to its reference, the number of usage of this term is as follows:

<i>Geisha</i>	<i>Le Monde</i>		<i>Libération</i>		<i>Le Figaro</i>	
1995	<b>1</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	
	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan
	1	0	0	0	0	0
2000	<b>3</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>6</b>	
	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan
	1	2	0	2	3	3
2005	<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>5</b>	
	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan	reference concerning Japan	reference which doesn't concern Japan
	0	1	0	3	3	2
Total	5		5		12	

No features of the concept *geisha* were found in the corpus, as the term was used to describe other references, which do not designate a geisha. In comparison to *Le Monde* and *Libération*, *Le Figaro* uses the term *geisha* more often. The usage rate of *geisha* with reference to Japanese cultural events or people is 40 percent in *Le Monde*, 0 percent in *Libération* and about 55 percent in *Le Figaro*. In the present analysis, the stages of the introduction of the term to other societies are presented. Some extracts of the corpus where the term *geisha* was used are going to be analyzed according to each of the following six stages.

## The first and the second stages

In the first stage, the fixed idea about “a geisha as a female artist presented in the Japanese tradition” through “authority” is constructed. In the second stage, this fixed idea becomes a stereotype “Japanese women are the phantasm of the Orient, submissive and obedient.” The term *geisha* is used as one of stereotypemes of this stereotype to explain the features of a geisha or Japanese women

The first and the second stage was not found in our corpus, but the concept *geisha* appeared in some Lithuanian national newspapers, such as *Lietuvos Rytas* and *Respublika* published in the same period as the French ones and may be ascribed to the first and the second stage. Three articles on geisha were found in the newspapers: “Bar Girls, Rivals of Japanese Geishas” (*Lietuvos Rytas* 17/01/1995); “The Geisha” (*Respublika* 02/12/1995); “Men trust their innermost desires to geishas”. These extracts are going to be analyzed in greater detail.

(a) A geisha - a beautiful and graceful traditional symbol of Japan” (*Lietuvos Rytas* 17/01/1995.)

(b) An actress. A single woman. A flirting woman. A waitress. A slave. A prostitute. These are not all names that a geisha can be called (*Lietuvos Rytas* 02/05/2000.)

(c) Geishas don't provide sexual services. They provide these rules only for their “dana,” (sic) a rich and constant sponsor, who behaves with her as with his second wife” (*Respublika* 02/12/1995)

The authors of these extracts are anonymous, thus, the authorities of the extracts (a) and (b) are not shown. As it has been mentioned, “Fixed ideas relate ‘the mechanism of acceptance of the authority’ and a ‘call to individual judgment’”: if the authorities would have been shown, these extracts could be considered as a fixed idea. However, here these anonymous sentences can be considered as a stereotype. Regarding extract (c), the source of this information is indicated at the end of the article; it is *ELLE*, the famous foreign women magazine published in 27 countries. Therefore it can be presupposed that *Respublika* relies on the value of *ELLE* as an authority to present what a geisha is and thus expresses it as a fixed idea.

In the three extracts, the *geisha* is defined by various expressions. These examples show that the common opinion towards geishas and even the women of Japan is reinforced by presenting a fixed idea through the use of definitions.

The examples express the fact that the term *geisha* is used as a xenism, “a foreign word mentioned with reference to the linguistic code of origin and to foreign realities.” If this term had already been known, it wouldn’t be necessary to explain and define what a *geisha* is by using an authority, that is, *geisha*’s features would not be new to awaken the curiosity of the readers.

In contrast, in the French newspapers, the term *geisha* is not used to construct a fixed idea as in some Lithuanian newspapers. This means that this term has already penetrated the French society as a pregrinism, “that reflects foreign realities, but the knowledge of its meaning is understood by the interlocutor” without explanation. Therefore, this term is used in some other ways.

### The third stage

The term *geisha* is synecdochically used as an adjective instead of the word *Japanese*. In this stage, it would be possible that the term *geisha* could implicitly include the sense of submission according to the context; therefore, it could be used as a pregrinism.

#### ***geisha*= epithet noun denoting “Japanese”**

First, a critical article “Japonaiseries” about the novel *Métaphysique des tubes*, which can be considered as Amélie Nothomb’s autobiography, is going to be examined:

(d) While reading this insipid “*prêchi-geisha*,” we deplore that a finally original subject is treated in such a disappointing way <...> (*Le Figaro, Le Figaro Littéraire* 31/08/2000)

The French expression *Prêchi-prêcha* signifies “moralizing discourse.” For example, it is used in the following way: “He bothers us with his *Prêchi-prêcha* (moralizing discourse).” The expression *prêchi-geisha* is a pun of *Prêchi-prêcha*. As a matter of fact, this book is not about *geishas*. In this context, the term *geisha* could be considered as denoting “Japanese” or “in the Japanese style.” The expression *prêchi-geisha* could signify “discourse in the Japanese style,” “discourse about Japan.” The adjective “insipid,” that is, “dry and dull,” evokes the idea that this expression would be used negatively, for example, as discourse by the writer who repeats the same clichés about Japan.

#### ***Geisha*=traditional Japan**



The following three examples are going to be analysed:

(e) *Pronuptia* (the name of shop) visits the geisha again.

An ingenious way to seduce women that have already done the tour around brand shops by proposing them new models: “japanizing” style in origami named kabuki, chizuko, shogun or Yokohama (*Le Figaro* 09/06/2005).

(f) In addition, we find the geisha corner with its ancient furniture; it’s practically impossible to find a named tansu, or this bath for girls of the last century (*Le Figaro* 10/02/2005).

(g) <...> seen by you, readers. Are you rather a corona or a sumo? Question 5. How did Chirac (the ex-President of the Republic of France), who is very keen on Japan, call his dog? a. Sushi. b. Geisha. c. Sumo. (*Libération* 21/04/2005)

In the three examples above, the term *geisha* is used synecdochically: in the title of extract (e), it refers to “japanizing style”; furthermore, the “*geisha* corner” refers to the corner in which some Japanese traditional furniture is sold (of course, *tansu* isn’t exclusive only to a geisha’s room, but also to all Japanese). Excerpt (f) shows that the term *geisha* is such a plausible Japanese word that can easily evoke the best things related to Japan; therefore, the readers could believe that Nippophilic Chirac could call his dog *geisha*.

### The fourth stage

The term *geisha* is synecdochically used to designate “Japanese women,” which is expressed in the following two examples.

(h) When Raymond Guerlain offers to a Tokyoite geisha a bottle of Blue Time in 1962, we are amused to read about the embarrassment on the young woman’s face, the emblem of a person who doesn’t wear perfume (*Le Figaro* 11/05/2000).

(i) Two brands invent the new age perfume for geishas again. The perfume is consumed by the Japanese with the greatest discretion (*Le Monde* 24/05/2000)

These articles were published almost at the same time and describe perfume for Japanese women. In these examples, the statement could refer to “the young woman” in (h) and to “the Japanese women” in (i). But in the first example, it is ambiguous to decide what the reference of the term *geisha* is: “a real geisha” or the “young woman.” It depends on the reader’s

interpretation. However, in the second example, it can be understood clearly from the context that the term *geisha* doesn't refer to a real *geisha*, but to "Japanese women" synecdochically and constructs the fixed idea: Japanese women don't use much perfume. In this stage, the term *geisha* could also be considered as a pregrinism, similarly to the term *perestroika* mentioned above, whose denoted process does not lose its reference to Japan.

### The fifth stage

Here the term "*geisha*" is used to refer to the appearance feature, in particular, her make-up: the face, which looks like white-plastered, and red lips, which is common for Japanese women. This is a metonymical usage. The examples reinforce this notion:

(j) Sonoko Suzuki, whose makeup is similar to a geisha's, gets a nickname "the queen of a white beauty" (*Le Figaro* 03/10/2000).

Without explanations, the expression "*geisha's* makeup" is used with the assumption that the readers of this newspaper know what the geisha's make-up is. In addition, the co-existent expression "the white beauty" confirms the common knowledge that the readers possess: "the face of a geisha looks like a white-plastered face." The expression "*geisha's* make-up" reinforces the connotations about Japan in the story of a Japanese woman Sonoko Suzuki.

In this stage, the term *geisha* could be considered as a pregrinism, as it was in the example of the third stage.

### The sixth stage

In this stage, the term *geisha* is used to refer to an appearance feature explicitly, without mentioning any relation to Japan. As it has been noted, the term *geisha* is used not only to refer the appearance feature, for example, "kimono-like" clothes, special makeup (white-plastered face and red lips) or something exotic, but it is also used to describe the non-Japanese cultural events as follows:

(k) White complexion, lightly powdered cheeks, eye as *camaieu* of blue, rose and green, rose, vivid or altering pigment of violent, round and fleshy

mouth. When the cherries are in blossom, the women in Bourgeois become geishas, mysterious and erotic dolls of porcelain (*Le Monde* 25/02/2005).

(l) Purple: the symbol of opulence and luxury; red colors the fashion and the art. It's a splendid color (...) but also the one of lingerie and of geisha's lips. Red blood expresses the notions of life, death and femininity (*Le Figaro* 07 /11/2000).

Here the term *geisha* denotes mysterious erotic dolls of porcelain that have white complexion or red lips. This could be considered as a self-evident truth. In addition, the term *geisha* is also used as an adjective ("Japanese") to refer to some foreign fashion style, which is a synecdochic usage. For instance, in the following example, the term *geisha* is used for "japanizing prints:"

(m) Suzanne Clements and Ignacio Ribeiro privilege 'the emotion rather than the literal translation' in some simple clothes. The *obi* belt is often emphasized, the energetic silhouette of their "cowboy geisha" mixes snapped blouse in vichy cotton, japanizing prints in a breath of fresh air (*Le Monde* 12/10/2000).

In some cases, the term *geisha* refers to non Japanese events and is also used to describe the appearance of celebrities, features of the fashion or make-up tendencies; for example:

(n) The angel of Charlie doesn't hesitate to disguise herself as geisha (*Le Figaro* 22/11/2000)

(o) Madonna, transforming into a fashion animal, follows the appearance of a geisha and a matador for the "Drowned World Tour" (*Le Figaro* 10/11/2005).

(p) Sportsmax fringed embroidered as geisha skirt (1690F) (*Le Figaro* 28/06/2000).

(q) This (...) graphic "geisha gold" at the back of a military khaki vest (*Le Figaro* 8/02/2005).

(r) Agatha Ruiz of Prada (Italian fashion brand name) (...) presents its collections (...), a sad clown or a geisha to amaze the gallery (*Libération* 29 /01/2000)

(s) The work of Nick Knight transforming her (Björk) to an imaginative geisha (*Libération* 07 /11/2000).

(t) J-1: Summit of G8 of Gleneagles in Scotland <...>. Wearing white and blue clothes of a pacifist geisha, Ben, 24, comes from Nottingham. He is an artist and has rejoined this high point of activism (*Libération* 05 /07/2005).

(u) After seeing his mask of Bioman and his costume of psychedelic Geisha,

one can doubt that this picturesque person is a rapper as the others (*Liberation* 01/10/ 2005).

(v) A rock star (Björk, immortalized by Nick Knight as a virtual geisha) (*Le Monde* 07 /10/2000).

Without photos, we couldn't assert that the extracts (n)-(v) really refer to the style of a *geisha* or the style associated with a *geisha*. However, the term *geisha* is always used without explanation; this signifies the author's presupposition that his readers could use their common knowledge to read and to interpret the metonymical usage of the term *geisha*, i.e. white face, red lips, features of appearance or something exotic. Therefore, the term *geisha* could also be considered to be used as a *pregnism*.

In addition, the fact that this term doesn't refer to a Japanese person signifies its penetration into the French society, as it appears to be known well-enough. But can we say that in this stage the term *geisha* is not an intercultural stereotyped expression, concerning Japan any more? It may occur that the journalist would sometimes use the term *geisha* inadequately to the context on purpose in order to make the reader think what this term means in this context. In such a way, the reader should finally be affected by this sentence as a way of persuasion. Especially, for example, the usage of the term *geisha* is not logical in extract (t): "Wearing white and blue clothes of a pacifist geisha, Ben, 24, comes from Nottingham. He is an artist, and has rejoined this high point of activism." The reader tries to understand what *geisha* means in this context, i.e. Ben, a 24-year-old man, artist and political activist. It is not very important to understand the intention of the writer. The important thing for the journalist is to attract the reader's attention.

## Conclusion

Taking into consideration social context, the term *geisha* evolved from the xenism in order to be able to construct a fixed idea, through a *pregnism* as a stereotypeme to describe Japanese or non-Japanese cultural events. But under any circumstances, the term *geisha* can't hide the original stereotypical significations of the word, such as like "phantasm of the Orient" or "obedient." Any usage of this term reinforces the stereotypical significations of this term implicitly.

As the first step, it was examined how the term *geisha* is constructed and

communicated in some representative contemporary French newspapers through the discourse determined by the period when the new image of Japan and Japanese women has appeared. Further research will have to deal with the related photos. As it has been pointed out, in the present corpus, the term *geisha*, the famous stereotypical expression, is not used as a xenism like in some Lithuanian newspapers, but as a peregrinism to designate Japanese woman or Japan synecdochically, while the appearance of a *geisha* is used metonymically to describe even a non-Japanese person.

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## Abstract

This paper analyses how *geisha*, one of the most famous traditionally stereotypical terms, is represented in contemporary French media.

The book *Idées reçues: Le Japon (Fixed ideas: Japan)* indicates that “the woman is submissive to the men and to her husband.” This is one of the most pervasive ideas about Japan, and Japanese women have often been described as the embodiment of “orient as phantasm,” the most famous representative of which is a *geisha*.

After the economic bubble burst in the 1990s, the items of Japanese popular culture, such as the manga started to be appreciated by people all over the world. In addition, the afterward of the book *Japonaises, la révolution douce (The Japanese, the soft revolution)* published in 2000 indicates that “the place the women occupy in the (Japanese) society has radically evolved in this period.”

The research reveals how a traditional term *geisha* was used in some French newspapers published in 1995, 2000 and 2005 during the period when the new image of Japan and Japanese women is projected in many countries.

### Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje analizuojama, kaip *gei a*, vienas iš garsiausių tradiciškai stereotipinių terminų, yra vartojamas šiuolaikinėje Prancūzijos žiniasklaidoje.

Knyga *Idées reçues: Le Japon* (lit. *Nuolatinės idėjos: Japonija*) teigia, kad „moteris yra nuolanki vyrams ir santuokiniui vyrui“. Tai – viena iš labiausiai paplitusių sampratų apie Japoniją, o japonės moterys aprašomos kaip „iluzijos įsikūnijimas“. Tipiškiausias tokio įvaizdžio pavyzdys yra *geiša*.

XX a. paskutiniame dešimtmetyje įvykus ekonomikos sprogimui, Japonijos populiariosios kultūros elementai, tokie, kaip *manga*, tapo vis populiaresni visame pasaulyje. Be to, 2000 m. išleistoje knygoje *Japonaises, la révolution douce* (lit. *Japonai, švelni revoliucija*) nurodoma, kad „vieta, kurią moterys užima (Japonijos) visuomenėje, šiuo laikotarpiu radikaliai evoliucionavo“.

Šis tyrimas atskleidžia, kaip *geišos* terminas buvo vartojamas kai kuriuose Prancūzijos laikraščiuose, leistuose 1995, 2000 ir 2005 m. – tuo metu, kai naujasis Japonijos ir japonių įvaizdis plito daugybėje šalių.

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