



# Butterfly's Sisters: The Geisha in Western Culture

*Yoko Kawaguchi*

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## Butterfly's Sisters: The Geisha in Western Culture Yoko Kawaguchi

In this fascinating and wide-ranging book, Yoko Kawaguchi explores the Western portrayal of Japanese women—and geishas in particular—from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day. She argues that in the West, Japanese women have come to embody certain ideas about feminine sexuality, and she analyzes how these ideas have been expressed in diverse art forms, ranging from fiction and opera to the visual arts and music videos. Among the many works Kawaguchi discusses are the art criticism of Baudelaire and Huysmans, the opera *Madama Butterfly*, the sculptures of Rodin, the Broadway play *Teahouse of the August Moon*, and the international best seller *Memoirs of a Geisha*. *Butterfly's Sisters* also examines the impact on early twentieth-century theatre, drama, and dance theory of the performance styles of the actresses Madame Hanako and Sadayakko, both formerly geishas.

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