

Eugenia Prasol

Literary Representations of Japan

At the Intersection of David Mitchell and Haruki Murakami's Worlds

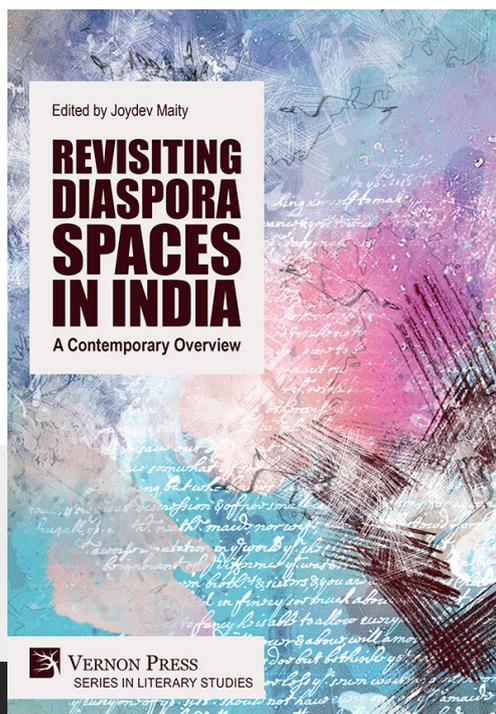
SERIES IN LITERARY STUDIES

About the author

Eugenia Prasol received an MA in Global Humanities and Social Studies, from Nagasaki University, in 2020, where she also worked as a teaching assistant. Prior to that, she received a BA in Japanese Language and Literature (2007) and an MA in Comparative Literature (2008) in Dnipropetrovsk National University, Ukraine, where she worked as a lecturer, teaching Japanese language and literature (2008-2016). Her research interests focus on contemporary Japanese studies, comparative studies, literary and cultural representations, and the image of Japan inside and outside the country studied on the basis of literary works of English, American, and Japanese authors.

Summary

This book will focus on analyzing the different aspects of Japan's representation in the novels of Haruki Murakami and David Mitchell. It is proven that Murakami creates and recreates Japan without implementing any orientalist features or exotic imagery. In the works of both authors, the intent to depict a new world of Japan stripped of traditional stereotypical traits becomes clear. The difference between Murakami and Mitchell's representation of Japan lies in the difference between Japan as seen by the Japanese and Japan as seen by modern Westerners, but both are 'correct' images of Japan. It is a recreation of the global image of Japan. In that sense, the texts of Murakami and Mitchell are complementary representations of Japan through East-West cultural dialogue. Studying the representations of Japan and Japanese national character helps to understand the role of Murakami and Mitchell in the formation of a new image of Japan, the de-stereotyping of anachronistic ideas about Japanese national exclusivity, enriching by doing so the world literature with new visions of the country and its culture. The purpose of the comparative analysis of English and Japanese literary works performed in this work is to reveal both deep analogies and differences in the representation of the image of Japan, actualizing the national specificity of the texts. This research advances the understanding of how both general and specific components of literary representations of Japan and Japaneseness are manifested in the East-West cultural dialogue.



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