



Writing Okinawa: Narrative acts of identity and resistance (Routledge Studies in Asia's Transformations)

By Davinder L. Bhowmik

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Writing Okinawa is the first comprehensive study in English of Okinawan fiction, from its emergence in the early twentieth-century through its most recent permutations. It provides readings of major authors and texts set against a carefully researched presentation of the region's political and social history; at the same time, it thoughtfully engages with current critical perspective with perspectives on subaltern identity, colonialism, and post-colonialism, and the nature of "regional," "minority," and "minor" literatures.

Is Okinawan fiction, replete with geographically specific themes such as language loss, identity, and war, a regional literature, distinct among Japanese letters for flourishes of local color that offer a reprieve for the urban-weary, or a minority literature that serves as a site for creative resistance and cultural renewal? This question drives the book's argument, making it interpretative rather than merely descriptive. Not only does the book provide a critical introduction to the major works of Okinawan literature, it also argues that Okinawa's writers consciously exploit, to good effect the overlap that exists between regional and minority literature. In so doing, they produce a rich body of work, a great deal of which challenges the notion of a unified nation that seamlessly rises from a single language and culture.

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- Sales Rank: #2233003 in Books
- Published on: 2012-04-19
- Released on: 2012-04-17
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.21" h x .56" w x 6.14" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 248 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

'Bhowmik's book also reveals an impressive command of Japanese and western literature, with which she frequently compares and contrasts the works of the Okinawan writers she discusses.' - *HUGH CLARKE, University of Sydney, Japanese Studies 29/1*

'At last, we have a book-length study in English that explores the rich diversity of modern Okinawan fiction. That fact alone would be cause for celebration, but Davinder L. Bhowmik's *Writing Okinawa* does far more than merely fill a gap in extant English Language scholarship on Okinawan Literature. Through detailed analysis of a wide range of fiction published from the early twentieth century to the present day, this book offers diverse perspectives into the region's perpetually shifting, yet ever tenuous, relationship with the Japanese state.' - *Kristine Dennehy, Monumenta Nipponica 64:2 (2009)*

About the Author

Davinder L. Bhowmik is Assistant Professor of Japanese Literature at the University of Washington, USA.

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