



Fiction Across Borders: Imagining the Lives of Others in Late-Twentieth-Century Novels

Shameem Black

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Theorists of Orientalism and postcolonialism argue that novelists betray political and cultural anxieties when characterizing "the Other." Shameem Black takes a different stance. Turning a fresh eye toward several key contemporary novelists, she reveals how "border-crossing" fiction represents socially diverse groups without resorting to stereotype, idealization, or other forms of imaginative constraint. Focusing on the work of J. M. Coetzee, Amitav Ghosh, Jeffrey Eugenides, Ruth Ozeki, Charles Johnson, Gish Jen, and Rupa Bajwa, Black introduces an interpretative lens that captures the ways in which these authors envision an ethics of representing social difference. They not only offer sympathetic portrayals of the lives of others but also detail the processes of imagining social difference.

Whether depicting the multilingual worlds of South and Southeast Asia, the exportation of American culture abroad, or the racial tension of postapartheid South Africa, these transcultural representations explore social and political hierarchies in constructive ways. Boldly confronting the orthodoxies of recent literary criticism, *Fiction Across Borders* builds upon such seminal works as Edward Said's *Orientalism* and offers a provocative new study of the late twentieth-century novel.

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