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Title:	Playing in the Shadows: Fictions of Race and Blackness in Postwar Japanese Literature
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Abstract:	<p>This dissertation is the first book-length study to consider the literature, primarily prose narratives, engendered by postwar Japanese authors' encounters with African Americans and African American literature. The dissertation argues that the "blackness" of postwar Japanese fiction is written in two modalities. The first mode fixates on the representation, and thus the imaginary mastery, of black (typically male) bodies. Given the influx of African American soldiers and black culture in Japan evoked by the Allied Occupation, the early postwar period saw an uptick in works written in the first mode, i.e. the postwar novellas of authors such as Ishikawa Jun and Kojima Nobuo. The very influx of black people and culture that catalyzed production in the first mode, however, also served as an impetus for the creation of organizations such as the Kokujin kenkyu&amp;#363; no kai (The Japanese Association for Negro Studies) and literary endeavors such as the Kokujin bungaku zenshu&amp;#363; (The Complete Anthology of Black Literature). This milieu sparked Japanese authors'--Nakagami Kenji and &amp;#332;e Kenzabur&amp;#333; are two such examples--interest in reading, interpreting, critiquing and, ultimately, incorporating the tropes and techniques of African American literature and jazz performance into their own literary works. Such incorporation leads to a second mode of writing blackness in Japanese literature. The blackness of literary works written in the second mode arises not by virtue of the representation of black characters, but by virtue of the works' investment in the possibility of writing Japanese literature that has black literature and history in its intertextual and contextual networks. Whereas previous scholarship itself has fixated on the first mode, this dissertation amalgamates textual analysis and literary historical investigation in order to fully delineate the rich history of black-Japanese literary exchange and bimodal writing of blackness in Japanese literature Through five case studies that progress chronologically from Ishikawa Jun's "&amp;#332;gon densetsu" (The Legend of Gold, 1946) to Yamada Eimi's Payday!!! (2003), this dissertation both reconsiders postwar Japanese literary representations of blackness and argues that black-Japanese literary exchange created a vein of modern Japanese literature shaped by Japanese authors' interpretations of blackness and black fiction.</p>
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