

The Great Passage: Unraveling the Literary Legacy of Shion Miura

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In the vast tapestry of Japanese literature, few works have captivated readers with such enduring brilliance and resonated as profoundly as Shion Miura's masterpiece, *The Great Passage*. This sprawling epic, spanning decades, delves into the intricate world of Japanese dictionary-making, unraveling the lives and passions of those who dedicate their existence to the preservation of language.

Biography of Shion Miura

Shion Miura, born in 1970, is a renowned Japanese novelist whose works have garnered critical acclaim and numerous prestigious literary awards. Her writing career blossomed in the late 1990s with the publication of her debut novel, *A Long Summer Bird*, which instantly propelled her to literary

stardom. Miura's distinctive style, characterized by meticulous research and a deep understanding of human nature, has become her signature.

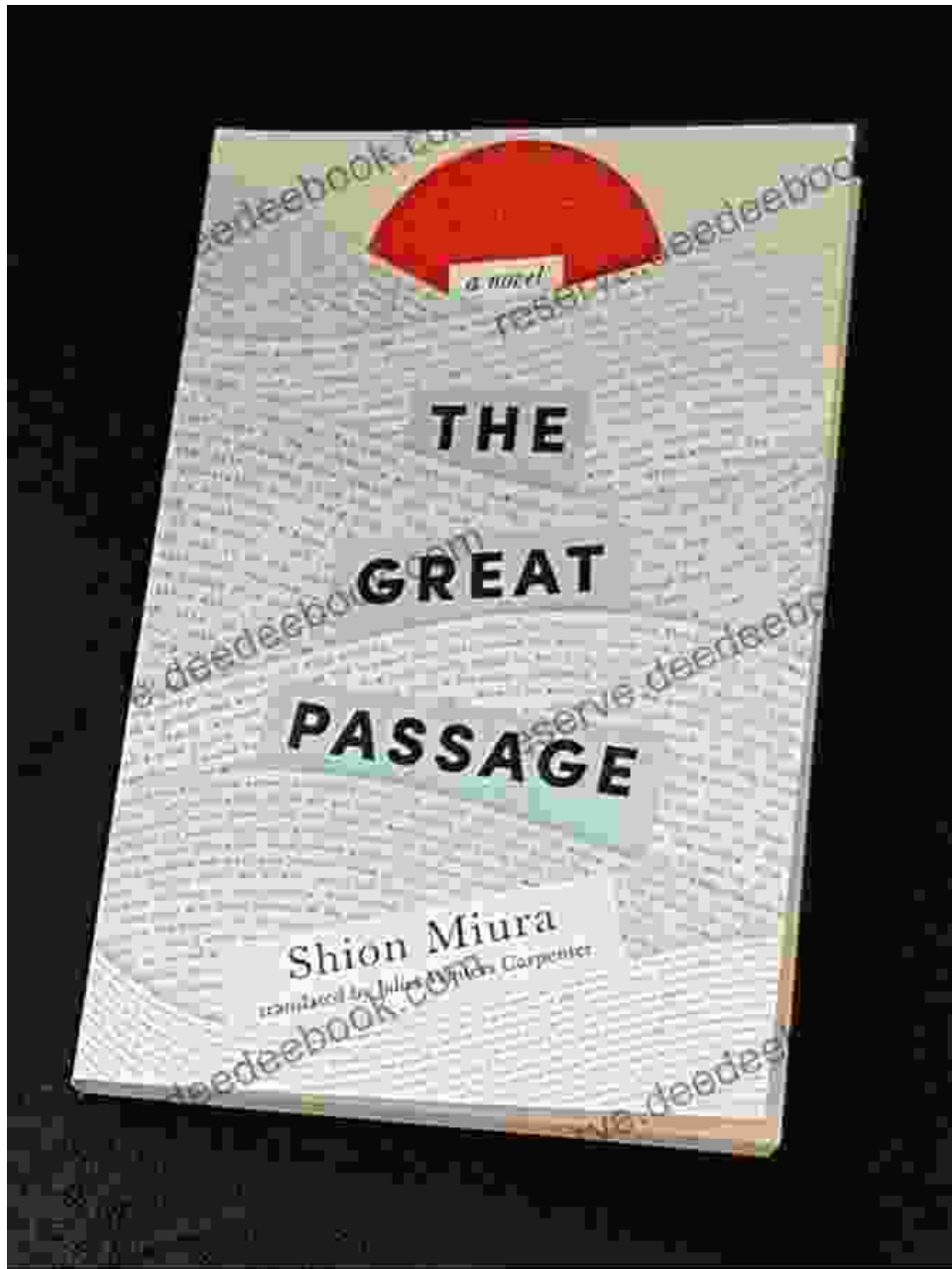


The Great Passage by Shion Miura

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 4373 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 224 pages





The Great Passage: An Overview

Published in 2008, *The Great Passage* is a historical novel that chronicles the development of a comprehensive Japanese dictionary, known as *The Great Japanese Dictionary*, over three generations. The story unfolds through the perspectives of multiple characters, each with their unique motivations and struggles related to the ambitious project.

The novel begins in 1988 and follows Mitsuya Majime, a young editor at the Genbu publishing house, as he embarks on the arduous task of compiling The Great Japanese Dictionary. Through his meticulous research and unwavering dedication, Majime faces countless obstacles and personal sacrifices to ensure the dictionary's completion.

Characters and Themes in The Great Passage

Masaru Majime



Masaru Majime, Mitsuya's father, is a legendary lexicographer who has dedicated his life to the creation of The Great Japanese Dictionary. His unwavering passion and encyclopedic knowledge drive the project forward, making him a respected figure in the field.

Kotoko Azuma



Kotoko Azuma is a brilliant and ambitious editor who joins the dictionary project. Her determination and unconventional approach often clash with Majime's more conservative methods, creating tension within the team.

Tsuyoshi Matsumura



Tsuyoshi Matsumura is a skilled editor and Majime's right-hand man. His loyalty and unwavering support are essential to the completion of the dictionary.

Themes

The Importance of Language: The Great Passage explores the vital role that language plays in shaping our understanding of the world. The characters' dedication to preserving the Japanese language highlights its significance in fostering cultural identity and ensuring the continuity of human thought.

The Power of Collaboration: The dictionary project is a testament to the extraordinary achievements that can be accomplished through collaboration and collective effort. It demonstrates that even the most ambitious endeavors can be realized through the dedication of many.

The Relentless Pursuit of Knowledge: The characters' unwavering determination to complete The Great Japanese Dictionary reflects the importance of knowledge and the intellectual pursuit. The novel celebrates the human capacity for learning and the transformative power of understanding.

The Passage of Time: The Great Passage spans several decades, capturing the evolution of language and society over time. It explores the ephemeral nature of language and the enduring legacy of those who dedicate their lives to preserving it.

Literary Style of The Great Passage

Shion Miura's writing in The Great Passage is characterized by meticulous research and a deep understanding of the subject matter. Her use of detailed descriptions and historical context creates a vivid and immersive experience for readers.

The novel's prose is elegant and precise, reflecting the meticulous nature of dictionary-making. Miura's ability to weave together the technical aspects of lexicography with the personal stories of the characters creates a profound and engaging narrative.

Awards and Recognition

The Great Passage has garnered widespread critical acclaim and numerous prestigious literary awards, including:

- 2009 Booksellers Award
- 2010 Naoki Prize

- 2011 Kawabata Yasunari Literary Prize
- 2012 International Booker Prize Longlist

Adaptations of The Great Passage

The Great Passage has been adapted into various formats, including:

- A 2010 Japanese television series
- A 2013 South Korean film
- A 2014 Japanese stage play
- A 2019 English translation by Juliet Winters Carpenter

Shion Miura's *The Great Passage* is a masterful work of literature that transcends the realm of dictionaries and lexicography. It is a captivating story of human endeavor, passion, and the enduring power of language. Through its unforgettable characters and poignant themes, *The Great Passage* has left an indelible mark on Japanese literature and continues to inspire readers worldwide.



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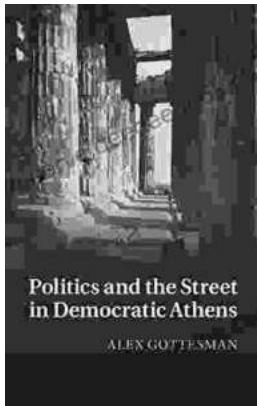
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