

Minority Studies



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Table of contents

- I - Chapter Two: Key Concepts of Minority Literature** **3**
- 1. Objectives of Chapter Two 3
- 2. Diaspora 3
- 3. Multiculturalism 4
- 4. Hybridity 5
- 5. Self-assessment 5
- II - Final Examination** **7**
- 1. The First Term Exam of Minority Studies 7
- References** **8**

I Chapter Two: Key Concepts of Minority Literature

1. Objectives of Chapter Two

- The main objective of this section is to introduce to the students theoretical critical concepts that enables them to critically analyze minority literature
- This chapter defines Diaspora, Multiculturalism, and Hybridity
- This chapter will conclude that using these theoretical concepts, the student will be able to subvert the very idea of a dominant culture and a unique canon, and invites a re-examination of power structures.

2. Diaspora

🔍 Definition



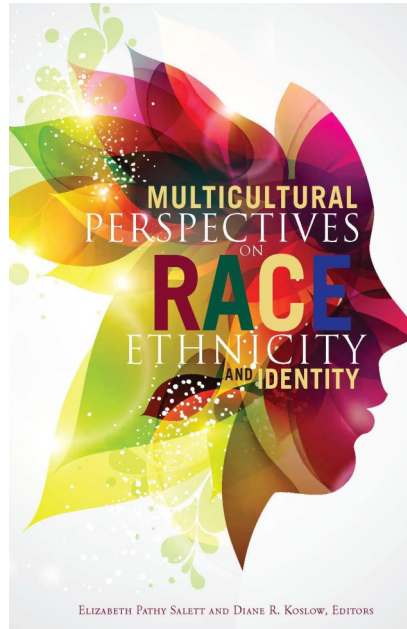
Multicultural wordle

The word *diaspora*^{*} suggests a linkage asserted in the context of *exile* from a homeland and a unity in the varying circumstances confronting a scattered population. Such a concept refers to *dispersed people*. It refers to those *displaced* populations such as the exiled who resettled across much Europe and Asia. This category faces *dislocation*

and *alienation*, among other issues, and are considered as *minor groups* living in the *margins* of the *dominant* culture. Diaspora is connected to *minority studies* as it raises critical awareness and issues related to minorities living overseas and it exposes the formulation of *identity* as a positioning or as a project, repudiating the idea of definite and stable home.

3. Multiculturalism

🔍 Definition



Race identity and ethnicity

Multiculturalism^{*} has turned practically all countries of the world into jumbles of different cultures that cannot be defined and simply explained by geography and/or nationality. It has probably always been this way more or less, but the frequency of *cultural encounters*. Multicultural literature is a fairly new genre that came into existence in the 1960's. It is a result of the *anti-racist movement* and a reaction to the lack of representation in literature.

⊕ Extra

However, there is an ongoing debate whether the genre could possibly be harmful to its own pro-multicultural intentions, since it isolates minorities from the norm.

⚙️ Method

The teacher provides students with a reading experience which to a greater degree than other available experiences enriches their perception of what it is to be human. Thus, the teacher introduces different writers who belong to different cultural backgrounds writing in English other than solely writers of the canons.

4. Hybridity

🔍 Definition

The concept of *hybridity** is intrinsically linked to the notion of *identity for multi-cultural individuals, migrants* and *diasporic communities*. This concept is revealed through literary and artistic works that represent people of *multiple identities* and *mixed origins* who experience their *hybridity* with more or less serenity and whom society welcomes with varying degrees of benevolence. These *“in-between”* people or *hyphenated* communities occupy a displaced position which can provoke a sense of *fragmentation, dislocation and discontinuity*, both in terms of space and time. In minor literature, *hybridity* presents itself as an alternative discourse that *subverts* the very idea of a dominant culture and a unique canon, and invites a re-examination of power structures.

5. Self-assessment

Exercise

Globalization is best defined by

- the reshaping of the entire globe by powerful social, cultural, and political processes.
- a cybernetics revolution.
- a phenomenon with effects that are uneven in their distribution.
- persistent cultural interaction and exchange.
- All of the above.

Exercise

What term for group identity emphasizes the movement of people from a single homeland to many places around the world?

- trans-border citizenry
- long-distance nationalists
- diaspora
- legal citizens
- substantive citizens

Exercise

Based on the discussion of globalization in the text, which of the following factors are responsible for the fact that most nation-states are not culturally homogeneous?

- colonialism
- migration
- ethnic conflict
- reterritorialization
- All of the above.

Exercise

Which of the following statements about multiculturalism is true?

- Multiculturalist orientation views cultural hybridity as something desirable.
- Multiculturalism encourages the practice of many ethnic tradition
- A multicultural society celebrates cultural hybridity.
- A multiculturalist orientation views cultural hybridity as something that can be commoditized.
- All of the above.

Exercise

As discussed in the chapter, which of the following statements best captures the distinction between human rights and the rights of cultures (including the right to culture)?

- The United Nations protects human rights, but does not consider the rights of cultures as entities.
- Being more limited, cultural rights are easier to defend than human rights.
-

While human rights are applied universally to all human beings, particular cultural rights are bestowed to distinct groups.

- While human rights are real, cultural rights are only alleged.
- None of the above.

References

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