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Rethinking Hybridity from a Pluralistic Perspective in Selected Twentieth-Century Multiethnic American Fiction and Criticism

Hussein Hasan Zeidanin
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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RETHINKING HYBRIDITY FROM A PLURALISTIC PERSPECTIVE
IN SELECTED TWENTIETH-CENTURY MULTIETHNIC AMERICAN FICTION AND
CRITICISM

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Hussein Hasan Zeidanin
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of English

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Hussein Hasan Zeidanin

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

06/30/2011

Signatures on File

Lingyan Yang, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of English, Advisor

06/30/2011

Signatures on File

Suzan Comfort, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of English

06/30/2011

Signatures on File

Karen Dandurand, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of English

ACCEPTED

Signatures on File

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.

Dean

School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: Rethinking Hybridity from a Pluralistic Perspective in Selected Twentieth-Century
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Author: Hussein H. Zeidanin

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Lingyan Yang

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Suzan Comfort

Dr. Karen Dandurand

My dissertation primarily reaffirms the multicultural identity of the American society based on the polyethnic structure of the population and widely recognized contributions of minorities to the social and cultural development of the United States. However, my dissertation forewarns against the separatism and isolationism the discourse of multiculturalism may engender; and it subsequently assumes that multiculturalism should be viewed not as an end as but as a means to the higher causes of hybridity, interdependence and reciprocity.

In like manner, my dissertation reproaches Bhabha's theory of hybridity for signifying internationalism, reproducing ambivalence and nurturing the nihilistic values of absolutism and ethnocentrism. Considering these shortcomings and faults with multiculturalism and hybridity, my dissertation proposes the conception of situated cosmopolitan hybridity to redress the ambivalent instable attachments of hybrid people, moderate the chauvinism and prejudices of nativists and nationalists, and counterbalance the globalism of hybridity with the particularism of multiculturalism.

The manifestations of multicultural hybridity, my dissertation argues, are evident in the twentieth-century ethnic awakening whose seeds are located in the experiences of dispossession, discrimination, displacement and immigration which minority Americans have lived through for no sin other than being of a different color and culture. They are as well instanced by the rise of

Third World feminism which, unlike the homogenizing ideology of western feminism, maintains the cultural heterogeneity of the communities of women and recognizes the diversity of women's oppressive experiences which range from universal sexism and classism to particular imperialisms and racisms.

The significance of my dissertation results from the considerable contributions it achieves: On one hand, it reconstructs hybridity on the values of diversity, interdependence and impartiality which I presume would create bridges of collaboration, communication and understanding among peoples of different cultural backgrounds and develop a collective consciousness best respecting and representing the diverse ethnocultural structure of the society and the world as a whole. On the other hand, it reconceives the essentialism of the anticolonial discourse of subaltern American minorities and that of American women of color as an abolitionist of integrationism and separatism and the fountainhead of pluralism and multiculturalism in the contemporary United States.