

Transculturation and Aesthetics

Ambivalence, Power, and Literature

This collection is a timely reflection on the momentous concept of transculturalism. With its historical roots in globalization, transculturation, oriented to (new) aesthetics, seeks new cultural formations, and, with its heterogeneous author- and readership, enlists active participation by the individual. The volume focuses on the interplay between and lapses within interrelated domains of study – postcolonial, diaspora, and world-literary – which attend to the material and discursive circumstances of the literary work. The various readings argue for a situated mode of reading that attends to literary meaning emerging from transaction across, struggle between, and appropriation of cultures, both intra- and internationally, and, by definition, not tied exclusively to a colonial historical paradigm. The overarching themes – ambivalence, power, and literature – are approached transculturally and aesthetically with four distinct concerns in mind: theorization of transculturation; diaspora and migration; the African legacies of colonial slavery and its global aftermath; and localized topics that diversify the interpretation and definition of transculturation and its relation to an (emerging) aesthetic that goes beyond nationally constrained (geographical, cultural, linguistic, literary, etc.) boundaries. Themes range from literary representations of archaeological sites to the contest over meaning that follow efforts to exhume the past, from the ethics of queer love in diaspora to the effects of global literary marketing, from the development of transcultural identities in the colonial encounter to domestication and foreignization in the translation of Aboriginal texts. Authors discussed include Michael Ondaatje, Vernon Anderson, Barry Unsworth, Salman Rushdie, Yvonne Vera, Chiang Hsun, Sally Morgan, Doris Pilkington, Sarfraz Manzoor, Sathnam Sanghera, Yasmin Hai, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Timothy Wangusa, Fred D'Aguiar, Amitav Ghosh, and Jack Kerouac. Joel Kuortti is Head of the School of Languages and Translation Studies and Professor of English at the University of Turku, Finland. He has published widely on Indian English literature, especially on Salman Rushdie. His other chief interests include postcolonial theory, transcultural identity, hybridity, and cultural studies.

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