Ethnic boundaries in national literary histories: Classification of ethnic minority fiction authors in American, Dutch and German anthologies and literary history books
Ethnic boundaries in national literary histories: Classification of ethnic minority fiction authors in American, Dutch and German anthologies and literary history books, 1978-2006

This article compares the classification of ethnic minority fiction writers in American, Dutch and German literary anthologies and literary history books for the period of 1978-2006. Using content analyses, ethnic boundaries are much stronger in Dutch and German textbooks than in their American counterparts. While, across the entire period, Dutch and German textbooks under-represent ethnic minority authors - relative to the share of ethnic minorities in the population - and emphasize their ethnicity, American anthologies from 1991 to 2006 over-represent ethnic minorities and classify these authors primarily in literary terms. These findings are not only due to demographics alone but also related to differences in the field of textbook publishing (United States) and the extent to which national cultural repertoires vary from moderate ethnic inclusion (Netherlands) to strong ethnic exclusion (Germany).

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Recent Innovations in American Fiction (Elżbieta Foeller). 71 12. Some discuss specific literary genres (drama, poetry) or trends (the realistic and naturalistic tradition, transcendentalism), while others are organized by historical periods or by ethnic categories (colonial, post-World War I, Afro-American literature). This diversity signifies a practical goal – to provide students with a clear indication of the dominant character and relative importance of particular authors and periods. This view was vehemently opposed by a very vocal minority, called Congregationalists, and since the original American Puritans came from this group, their views are of a particular interest to us. In terms of literary products, Gelder considers popular fiction to be the “opposite of Literature”. (Gelder, 2004 p.11). 1.4 The relationship between popular fiction and literary system. Despite the widespread popularity of popular fiction, in academic world, the place of popular fiction and its importance in the literary system is still not clear. A confess in academic world that popular fiction models are received with “doubts and uncomprehending responses.” From the dawn of history, to exchange information has always been one of the most important activities of mankind. Thus, it has always been extremely significant to have sufficient information about what is happening in near or distant countries. This article compares the classification of ethnic minority fiction writers in American, Dutch and German literary anthologies and literary history books for the period of 1978–2006. Using content analyses, ethnic boundaries are much stronger in Dutch and German textbooks than in their American counterparts. While, across the entire period, Dutch and German textbooks under-represent ethnic minority authors – relative to the share of ethnic minorities in the population – and emphasize their ethnicity, American anthologies from 1991 to 2006 over-represent ethnic minorities and classify these aut...