



Postcolonial Studies Association
Decolonizing the Ecological Crisis



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Newsletter #30

#30 – October 2023

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Editorial

Welcome to the PSA Newsletter #30. Francesca and Jennifer are excited to share the new issue “Decolonizing the Ecological Crisis”, exploring notions of the Anthropocene, human and more-than-human agency, as well as examining the intersections between colonialism and our current ecological challenges through the lens of storytelling. As always, we hope to foster informed, wide-ranging, and respectful debates on the topic on focus, and more in general in the field of postcolonial studies, by sharing original contributions, conference reports, and funding reports by colleagues from across the world.

Athira Unni opens the newsletter with an exploration of the lasting legacies of colonialism on postcolonial landscapes and ecological conditions in South Asia through analysis of Manjula Padmanabhan’s contemporary dystopian novel *Escape*. This is followed by two articles which continue to focus on the ecological crisis in South Asia. **Mettin Jacob** analyses Kota Neelima’s novel *Shoes of the Dead* to enunciate the role of colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy in inflicting intersectional violence across the human and nonhuman realms in a fictionalised Indian agrarian community. **Arnab Das** and **Madhumita Roy** engage with Amitav Ghosh’s fictional and non-fictional work to expose climatic disruptions at global level, but with a particular focus on the Sundarbans, and to demonstrate the importance of an holistic eco-centric culture that promotes a coordinating balance between humans and nature. Next, **Joyce Onoromhenre Agofure** turns the attention to the African continent as she advances the notion that poetry might be used as a powerful critical tool to dramatise the damaging effects of extractivism and petroculture on the Niger Delta region. The last two authors of this section on original contributions draw attention to Indigenous perspectives and epistemologies. Through discussion of Julietta Singh’s *The Breaks*, **Sarah Kirpekar-Sauer** shows that settler scholars can contribute to decolonising mainstream Western environmentalism by engaging in meaningful dialogue with Indigenous relationality and land-based ontologies. Placing emphasis on the principle of *aloha ‘aina*, **Kristiawan Indriyanto** demonstrates that Native Hawaiian literature provides a space for challenging neo/colonial, anthropocentric structures but also for promoting more-than-human agency, sustainability and Indigenous cultural continuity.

Next, readers can find two reports on conferences that foster a broader debate about the interplay between storytelling and the natural world: one report on the 2023 Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) by **Katherine Huber**, and one report on the 2023 triennial conference of the European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (EACLALS). This last report has been co-authored by **Delphine Munos**, **Gigi Adair**, and **Isabel Carrera Suárez**, **Patricia Bastida Rodríguez** and **Paola Prieto Lopez**.

The issue also features **Colin Coleman**'s report on his fieldwork in India to support his research on the impacts of climate change on primary education in rural Indian villages, and **Michal Shalev**'s report on her research visits to several archive repositories and heritage sites across South Africa. Both research activities were supported by the Postcolonial Studies Association.

The final section of the newsletter includes information about the call for the next issue and useful contacts.

Happy reading!

Francesca and Jennifer

DR FRANCESCA MUSSI is an independent scholar, who has recently completed a Leverhulme ERC fellowship in the Department of Humanities at Northumbria University. She is currently working on a monograph examining how Indigenous literature can complement or challenge the work carried out by the Indian Residential School Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Her research interests also include postcolonial theory, gender studies, trauma studies, ecocriticism, and South African literature. In May 2020 her first book *Literary Legacies of the South African TRC: Fictional Journeys into Trauma, Truth and Reconciliation* was published by Palgrave Macmillan and demonstrated the value of the TRC as a literary subject in contemporary South African fiction.

DR JENNIFER GRAY teaches Modern British and Contemporary Anglophone literature as a tenured Assistant Professor at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tennessee, USA. From 1999-2018, she taught Composition and Sophomore Literature courses at TTU. In 2018, she received her PhD from Middle Tennessee State University and continued her career at TTU. In April 2021 her first book, *Culinary Diplomacy's Role in the Immigrant Experience: Fiction and Memoirs of Middle Eastern Women*, was published by Rowman & Littlefield. Dr. Gray's research interests include immigration, postcolonial theory, British literature 1900-1950, and Contemporary Black British, Asian, and Minority Ethnic literatures.



News

Call for Contributions and Book Reviews for PSA Newsletter #31: Exploring/ Expanding/ Challenging the Postcolonial Canon

The Lonely Londoners (1956); *Things Fall Apart* (1958); *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1967); *Midnight's Children* (1981); *A Small Place* (1988); *The God of Small Things* (1997); *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006)...

Though certainly not a complete list, this is a short list that most would agree are classics of postcolonial literature. These works range from seventeen years to almost seventy years in age. In the next PSA newsletter, we are interested in reflections of the postcolonial – What are the limits of the label Postcolonial? What postcolonial fiction and fiction that cannot be properly considered post-colonial but explores ongoing colonialism do you see as classic or so new that it has the potential to become a classic? What other works should be included in the list? What makes literature classic? What qualities do we seek in determining works that have the making of classic postcolonial/decolonial literature? Have those criteria changed or should they?

We are thus seeking contributions that explore/ expand/ challenge the Postcolonial canon through analysis of one or more texts - including critical essays, fiction, poetry, drama, memoirs, films and other media platforms.

Original contributions should be between 700 and 1,200 words and should be fully referenced using Harvard Referencing Style. Please also send a 100-word biographical statement.

We are also looking for **book reviews** in relation to any books in the field of postcolonial studies which were published within the last 5 years. **Reviews should be between 500 and 1,000 words and should be fully referenced using Harvard Referencing Style.**

The deadline for submissions is **24th January 2024**. Please submit your contribution via email to the PSA Newsletter editorial team: Francesca Mussi franci.mussi86@gmail.com and Jennifer Gray jgray@tntech.edu.

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