



Postcolonial Studies Association

Reinventing the Western Literary Canon



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Newsletter #32

#32 – April 2025

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Welcome to the PSA Newsletter #32. Francesca and Jennifer are excited to share the new issue “Reinventing the Western Literary Canon”, which explores and reflects on the ways in which postcolonial and Indigenous authors “reinvent the enemy’s language” by appropriating Western literary traditions – whether in format or in content – in order to challenge Western mainstream perspectives, expose colonial legacies, and bring to the fore their ontologies and cultural practices. 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, book reviews, and funding reports by colleagues from across the world.

The newsletter opens with **five original contributions**. **Caitlin H. Cronin** explores the ways in which Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie challenges traditionally-Western formats such as the bildungsroman and the language of the empire through analysis of *Purple Hibiscus*. **Wally Suphap** and **Jason Ueda** reflect on the pedagogical role of Cathy Park Hong’s *Minor Feelings* and the ways in which these essays help students engage with key concepts such as linguistic justice, translanguaging, and code-meshing, as well as challenging standard English hegemony. **Mohammad-Hossein Abedi-Valoojerdi** draws attention to Nick Joaquin’s literary production, highlighting how the Filipino writer appropriates the language of the colonizer to create a distinctive style of English known as Joaquinque, thus resisting the erasure of Filipino identity. **Francesca Pierini** discusses Junauda Petrus’s *The Stars and the Blackness Between Them* in conjunction with John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars*, specifically placing emphasis on Petrus’s deconstruction of the tropes of linear storytelling, realistic writing, and heterosexuality. Focusing on the concept of translation in Don Mee Choi’s *DMZ Colony*, **Seyoung Kim** examines how poetry can serve as an autopoietic force to disrupt language standardisation in the Western literary canon, whilst simultaneously bringing to the fore Korean history and the coexistence, as well as the variations, of multiple languages.

Next, readers can find **Adwoa Tiwaah Ofori Atakorah**’s book review of *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities* by Mahmood Mamdani (2020) and **Dikko Yusuf**’s book review of *This Fiction Called Nigeria: The Struggle for Democracy* by Adéwálé Májà-Pearce (2024). This issue also features **Luca Raimondi**’s report on his PSA-funded research visit (PSA General Research Fund) to southern India to complete two case studies and gather research material for a book project emerging from his doctoral dissertation, and the editors’ interviews with 2023 PSA/JPW Essay Prize Winner **Ogochukwu Ukwueze** and & Runner-Up **Jade Jenkinson**.

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 has recently joined the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the Sapienza University of Rome as Adjunct Professor in English Literature and is also “Cultore della Materia” in English Literature in the Department of Philology, Literature and Linguistics at the University of Pisa. She completed a Leverhulme ERC fellowship in the Department of Humanities at Northumbria University in 2021. Her research interests include postcolonial/decolonial theory, gender studies, trauma studies, ecocriticism, North American Indigenous literatures, and South African literature. In October 2024 her second book, *Good Medicine Stories: Literary and Critical Explorations of Settler-Colonial Trauma, the Canadian TRC, and Indigenous Resurgence*, came out with Liverpool University Press; it demonstrates the role of Indigenous fiction in foregrounding Indigenous healing, spiritual regeneration and resurgence.

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 #33: The Decolonial Caribbean

In their 2023 book, *Language, Decoloniality, and Social Justice in the Caribbean*, Patrick-André Mather and Joel Morales-Rolón write that:

“The legacy of colonization and its effects on language policy and education continue to be felt today in the Caribbean, revealing the ongoing power structures established during the colonial period. Although most Caribbean nations are now independent countries, they retain the knowledge structure, values, languages, and legal and political systems of their former colonial powers. Decoloniality, therefore, means overcoming the legacy, the injustices, and the social hierarchies inherited from colonialism. This struggle for decoloniality goes beyond mere independence from former colonial powers.” (vi)

With their words in mind, we are seeking articles from across the disciplines that examine Caribbean indigenous and marginalized groups’ ways of being, challenge enduring colonial mindsets, and that include reclamation of identity and heritage, re-envisioning education, governance and cultural practices, economic systems, ecological and environmental justice, self-determination, language and storytelling traditions, cultural revival, and building the future.

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 **25th August 2025**. Please submit your contribution via email to the PSA Newsletter editorial team: Francesca Mussi franci.mussi86@gmail.com and Jennifer Gray jgray@tntech.edu.

PSA OFFICERS

Chair: Smriti Singh smritisinghiitp@gmail.com

Vice-Chair: Alberto Fernandez-Carbajal albertofcarbajal@gmail.com

Executive Secretary: David Firth d.h.firth@manchester.ac.uk

Treasurer: Marie Stack marie.stack@ntu.ac.uk

Membership Secretary: Paola Prieto Lopez prietopaola@uniovi.es

Newsletter Editor: Francesca Mussi franci.mussi86@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Gray jgray@tntech.edu

Website Officer: *David Firth (temporary)* d.h.firth@manchester.ac.uk

E-mail Officer: Esha Sil eshasil111@gmail.com

Postgraduate Officer/Early Career Representative: Luca Raimondi luca.raimondi@kcl.ac.uk

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

psa@postcolonialstudiesassociation.co.uk

<http://www.postcolonialstudiesassociation.co.uk/>

CREDITS Newsletter Design: Francesca Mussi and Jennifer Gray

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