

Words are more treacherous and powerful than we think". evaluate the extent to wh...

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



World literature; self taught language Hungarian: After reading the two books for my world literature, of mice and men and the outsider I decided I will compare the two books on the topic choice; portrayal of society in the literature studied. This includes points such as: Meursault and Lenny not being accepted in society for who they are because they are different than others; another point would be there is a lot of violence within societies. The rest will be presented further on in my essay. But before presenting my points I'd like to give you a brief idea of the two books and their writers. The book of mice and men is a fiction written by John Steinbeck (1902-1968). John Steinbeck writes mainly short stories and novels, he was born in Salinas California, which is the same area where the book of mice and men is set. He became widely known thanks to his piece: Of Mice and Men. Steinbeck's novels have themes of social criticism in them, a lot about the economic problems in rural labor. Good examples of books written by John Steinbeck: *Dubliners* (1936), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and *East of Eden* (1952). The story line is written in the beginning of the 1930's during the great depression. George and Lenny are two drifters seeking for a job so they will have enough money to pursue their dream. They found a work on a farm in California's Salinas valley where their hopes and dreams were shattered as Lenny was struggling against extreme cruelty, misunderstanding and feelings of jealousy. Lenny is a retarded person who is very strong and big in size and is quite innocent since many things in the world are new to him, especially new experiences. Lenny had a soft spot for petting animals and soft things and was totally oblivious to the fact that he

was much too big and strong for such delicate creatures, and even some humans. " Lenny's fingers fell to stroking her hair... he stroked harder... " Let go!" she cried... She struggled violently... and then she was still; for Lenny had broken her neck." (Page 91 of mice and men). In innocence of his own strength, Lenny had killed a woman and suddenly traded his innocence for guilt. Lenny however wasn't the only main character in the book. His drifting companion George was always there to protect Lenny from people who were smarter than him. He was a smart person as well and knew how to keep away from trouble and to get along with the other people in the farm. But having to take care of someone like Lenny is a big responsibility and has some consequences. The book of mice and men tries to make the reader feel pain towards Lenny's bad luck, but at the same time throughout the book the author helps us feel the ups and downs of leading a life like that of George and Lenny. Steinbeck was really keen on describing the settings of every scene in details so that we can see the place where the story takes place. He uses very old type of southern American language, to make the fact that the book is set at that certain time period more real and also to make us understand what kind of people George and Lenny are. This is quite similar to Steinbeck's writing style when compared to other books written by John Steinbeck, when looking at the themes that Steinbeck often likes to use in his books. The outsider is written by Albert Camus (1913-1960). Albert Camus was a representative of non-metropolitan French literature. His origin in Algeria and his experiences there in the thirties were dominating influences in his thought and work. His works had strong revolutionary

tendencies and had a lot of philosophy in them. After moving to France Camus joined the resistance movement during the occupation and after the liberation was a columnist for the newspaper Combat. He was a member of L'Equipe, an Algerian theatre group, whose " collective creation" Révolte dans les Asturies (1934) was banned for political reasons. Some examples of Albert's work: the stranger (1942), the plague (1947) First published in 1942 the outsider is a fiction based on a certain individual called Meursault who is prepared to face the indifference of the universe courageously and alone. Meursault leads an unremarkable bachelor life in Algiers until he commits an act of violence. His response to the incident challenges the fundamental values of society. A set of rules so binding that any person breaking them is condemned as an alien, an outsider. Albert Camus portrays Meursault the book's narrator and main character, as aloof, detached, and unemotional. He does not think much about events or their consequences, nor does he express much feeling in relationships or during emotional times. He displays impassiveness throughout the book in his reactions to the people and events described in the book. After his mother's death he sheds no tears and seems to show no emotions. He displays limited feelings for his girlfriend, Marie Cardona, and shows no remorse at all for killing an Arab. His reactions to life and to people distances him from his emotions, positive or negative, and from intimate relationships with others, thus he is called by the book's title, " the stranger". The language used in the book gives us the feeling as if the setting actually takes place in our time since the use of language seems quite modern as well as the words that Albert Camus makes use of for the

books' characters. It is interesting to see how Albert Camus really managed to make the character Meursault have the same characteristics all the way throughout the book and make us think more and more that Meursault is an apathetic. Also the way and timing that Albert used to put the climax of the book in, helped him achieve the goal of making the reader feel in one go sorry for Meursault for having end up the way he did. Both books of mice and men and the outsider show how people in our society are not willing to accept people because they believe that those people behave strangely. The farm workers in mice and men thought that Lenny is stupid and did not want to accept him because he is retarded. They made fun of Lenny and gave him and George problems simply because Lenny was different then them.

Meursault, the main character of the outsider was also not accepted in his own society for that same reason. He couldn't care less about his mother dieing also because he didn't have such a strong bond with her. He showed lack of feelings that a common human beings wouldn't show under that same situation that Meursault was in. Humans are scared of what is different then them and will show a lack of understanding towards those people, therefore Meursault was sentenced to death and Lenny kept being teased and get into trouble with the farm workers/owners. People in our society often seem to forget that were all human beings with feelings and friends and families and that life is very precious and that were all actually the same and are struggling our way through life. Some people choose to go the other direction and are trying to ruin our society by becoming criminals and lead a life of violence. In the outsider Meursault and his friend got caught in a fight

with a bunch of Arabs who wanted to kill Meursault's friend and Meursault himself for being there, the best solution Meursault and his friend had was to come back another day and try to do the same to those Arabs. Unluckily Meursault got caught and had to pay for his crime which according to society was also not showing any remorse to his mom's death (and other things that are described in the book). In the case of the book of mice and men Lenny gets picked on by the husband of the boss's daughter because the guy was clearly jealous of Lenny and needed to make an excuse for wanting to fight with him, but this happened simply because the guy disliked Lenny, also for the reason that Lenny was retarded. Both authors try to give us a view of some of the injustice in societies, both modern and old fashioned. The only difference is that people can practice their injustices with more advanced technology and a wider knowledge which could at one point lead to our extinction.