

## Editorial

Happy New Year, friends!!

In this first issue of 2024, we are delighted to present a compelling collection of papers that reflect the rich tapestry of literature and offer insightful explorations across diverse themes and perspectives. Instead of being focussed on a specific theme, these offerings cover a wide array of literary genres ranging from dramas and novels to short stories and also provide varied perspectives on major themes.

In the opening paper entitled “The Eco-Species Synergy: Exploring the Symbiosis of Ecocriticism and Specisism for Sustainable Coexistence”, Subhasree Rout and Nirlipta Pattanaik chart a metareview of the speciec-ist orientation within ecological debates that align it with an anthropocentric perspective. In the process, they unpack the challenges of this approach to show us possible points of intervention in creating an ecologically equitable planet.

The next paper, entitled “Expression in Repression: Examining the intricacies of female sexuality in Girish Karnad’s *Wedding Album*,” explores Girish Karnad’s examination of societal issues, particularly those related to women, in his plays, focusing on *Wedding Album*. The study by Shikha analyzes Karnad’s shift in writing style post-1997, emphasizing his engagement with modern themes such as identity, gender dynamics, globalization, and the clash between tradition and modernity. Shikha’s analysis of Karnad’s exploration of societal issues and feminist consciousness highlights his nuanced depiction of female sexuality and his impact on feminist discourse.

Next up is Ansul Chandra’s paper, titled “Resilience and Resistance: Women’s Struggles in *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*”, which explores the shared experiences of women in oppressive societies. Focusing on Gilead and Afghanistan, the study uncovers the commonality in the physical and emotional torment endured by female protagonists reduced to being little more than reproductive vessels. Chandra emphasizes the resilience and resistance of these women, who challenge discriminatory practices, expose prevailing brutality, and confront the underlying ideologies perpetuating their oppression.

In a perceptive paper titled “Unveiling Hidden Desires: A Feminist Analysis of Ismat Chughtai’s “Lihaaf”, Sameeksha Singh revisits the ever-relevant composition by Chughtai on love, sexuality, and human desire to understand feminism today, employing a presentist approach. Singh’s analysis focuses on drawing out the intersections of language, power, and gender, and their role in constituting gendered discourses of sexuality. Through this lens, the paper explores how Chughtai’s “Lihaaf” subverts established norms of heteronormativity, homonormativity, and gender relations, thereby amplifying silenced voices.

Finally, we have Reshu Shukla's paper, "Rethinking Femininity: Tagore's Chitra and Divakaruni's Draupadi as Paradoxical Portraits of Traditional Submissiveness", which explores the nuanced portrayal of femininity in Rabindranath Tagore's *Chitra* and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*. The analysis critically examines the paradoxical nature of female roles in these narratives, challenging traditional expectations. Both works are viewed as subversions of conventional notions of female submissiveness, offering a fine perspective on women's roles in society. The paper provides insights into Tagore's innovative approaches in rethinking femininity which encourage readers to reconsider preconceived ideas and foster a deeper understanding of the discourse on gender and identity.

In this edition, we are also featuring two reflective poems by Asoke K. Bhaduri. Both the creative efforts delve into the introspective nature of human experience, and provide thoughtful reflections on themes of resilience, acceptance, and finding solace in life's simple pleasures despite life's endless challenges. These five perceptive papers and poems enrich the literary panorama that *JTREL* is offering to its learned readers in the first edition of 2024.

Happy reading and may you have a delightful 2024!!

Regards,  
**Professor Shaila Mahan**  
Editor-in-Chief, *JTREL*.  
Former Joint Director,  
Commissionerate of College Education,  
Rajasthan, Jaipur.  
President, ELTAI Jaipur Chapter