

Editorial

It's a moment of special delight to present to you a *JTREL* edition that highlights the intersection of power, identity, and resistance in South Asian narratives. The academic canvas of South Asia has always been rich with explorations of these themes in literature. Contemporary scholarly works delve deeper into these themes and examine how they have evolved and manifested across different contexts—from the trauma of Partition to the intricacies of marginalisation, and from the evolution of literary periodicals to the portrayal of independent women. Each scholarly work, in this issue offers insights into the complexities of South Asian socio-cultural and political realities. In cumulation, they reflect how these elements shape, and are shaped by the narratives of our fascinating region.

The opening paper by Sowmya Gulati is a pithy study on Urvashi Butalia's *The Other Side of Silence* and sheds light on women's harrowing experiences during the Partition of 1947. By centering the voices of women, the paper reveals the intersection of gendered violence with patriarchal structures and nationalist ideologies. The analysis focuses on how women's bodies became battlegrounds for asserting religious and national pride. This work is an emotional reminder of the personal and collective suffering endured by women

Next is John Bosco's exploration of Bijoya Sawian's *Shadow Men* which takes us into the heart of subaltern politics in Meghalaya. Bosco examines how the insider-outsider binary, often manipulated by elites, fractures subaltern communities from within. This paper deftly navigates the complex dynamics of class consciousness and hegemony within subaltern groups and highlights the internal conflicts that challenge the monolithic view of subalternity. The study also explores how the discourse of belonging is weaponized, creating a nuanced understanding of subaltern politics and the power struggles that define them.

The next paper provides a historiographic study of Gujarati literary periodicals and offers a fascinating glimpse into the evolution of literary culture in Gujarat over the past 168 years. These periodicals have played a crucial role in shaping public discourse and reflecting the changing socio-political landscape. Ujas Pandya traces the development of these publications, their adaptation to the digital age, and their influence on Gujarati literature and society. By dividing the periodicals into different eras, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how these magazines have responded to and influenced the literary and cultural currents of their time.

S. Kanagarasu's analysis of Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* brings to the fore the struggles of women against patriarchal constraints in a socio-cultural context. Kapur's portrayal of the "new woman" is a powerful narrative of resistance, where educated female protagonists navigate the complexities of tradition and modernity. The paper explores how despite their education and aspirations, these women are often trapped by societal expectations. The paper underlines the gender inequality and the personal battles women must fight to assert their independence and redefine their identities in a patriarchal society.

Finally, Akansha Narayan's discourse analysis of beauty advertisements in India critiques the linguistic strategies used to perpetuate narrow beauty standards. By deconstructing advertisements from brands like Lakme and Garnier, the paper exposes how language is employed to sell not just products but an idealised image of beauty rooted in patriarchal and racial biases. The study challenges the normalization of these beauty standards and sheds light on how commercial advertising impacts social perceptions of beauty. The work is a call to question the power dynamics at play in the construction of beauty norms and their deep influence on individual and collective identities.

In sum, the papers offer insights into the intersection of power, identity, and resistance in South Asian narratives. They challenge us to rethink historical and contemporary issues from diverse perspectives stress the need to amplify marginalized voices and critically examine the structures that shape our understanding of identity. These papers enrich our discourse and resonate with the ongoing struggles for justice, equality, and self-expression in the larger socio-political landscape of South Asia.

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