

## Editorial

Greetings from the editorial team!

We're excited to begin the new year with yet another edition of the *Journal of Teaching and Research in English Literature* that brings together perspectives on new directions that literary studies and criticism is taking today. Literature studies have continued to expand and become interdisciplinary in its scope over the years. This diversification draws on the inherently interdisciplinary nature of the discipline as well as the recognition that the act of criticism is an essentially ethical act that constructs knowledge about individuals and societies. This imagination unfolds across five papers in this edition, as we explore persisting themes of identity, ecological harmony, spaces and power dynamics alongside emerging discourses on posthumanism and ethics in science and technology, which reflect, through their scope and commentaries, some of the most pressing concerns facing humanity.

Roger J. and Dr. Jayapaul's article on ecological consciousness lay the pathway for literary works as normative spaces when they explore ecological harmony in Barbara Kingsolver's novel *Prodigal Summer* (2000) through a Leopoldian lens that spotlights the integrity, beauty and stability of nature. As a holistic framework to understand current ecological relationships, the essay offers an ethical standpoint to evaluate human actions within larger environments. Karthiyayani and Dr. Pavithra adopt the posthumanist discourse to articulate the dangers of technology in human life if we fail to centre creativity, agency and ethics in our increasing interactions with technology. Their argument is rooted in Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005) and Octavia Butler's *Dawn* (1987) that look at genetic engineering as contested spaces of human creativity in technological societies, while pointing to the dangers of these processes that proceed without an ethical compass.

The three other papers in the volume deal with the always relevant issues of spaces, intersectional identity and border crossings that characterise human life and experience. "Heterotopology of Home and Homelessness" offers a reading of Daisy Hasan's *The To-Let House* (2010) guided by the Foucauldian discourse of heterotopia to understand a historical moment of conflict in Shillong. In the process, it considers ways of production and construction of spaces that can enable negotiation of crisis as well as its diffusion. Crisis persists as a theme of engagement in Thirsha's reading of intersectional identities in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997). Through an examination of different modes of recognising intersectional identities, the article comments on the ways in which it can, and continues to remain, sites of oppression and discrimination. Language and narrative is then a way of accessing, constructing, deconstructing and negotiating worlds and worldviews. Shruti Rawal's article on Gitanjali Shree's *Tomb of Sand* (2022) attempts one such analysis through a look at border crossings embedded within the use of language. By locating her argument within Jean-Francoise Lyotard's conceptualising of *petit récits*, Shruti unpacks the way the novelistic use of words, images, symbolism and magical realism offer some pathways to disrupts ideological absolutes and make way for pluralistic ways of apprehending reality and history.

We invite you to engage with these ideas as new directions to imagine literary criticism and the discipline of literature, as well as reflect on the disciplinary possibilities that such border-pushings entails in the literary humanities.

From,  
The Editorial Desk