

EDITORIAL

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Welcome to Volume 12 (1) of *Indialogs* and we are delighted to announce that as from 2025 we will be publishing two issues a year. As is the policy of *Indialogs*, we publish articles from a variety of disciplines including – in this issue – literary studies, travel writing, pedagogy, ethnography, history, human geography, art and sociology, all of which provide insights into the contemporary subcontinent, its people and its traditions. The theme of Vol. 12 (1) is “Ecofeminisms”, which was the topic of the AEEII conference in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in 2023. We understand ecofeminism very widely and in fact some of the articles do not mention it by name but they deal with how women are fighting to be recognised as equal partners in many walks of life.

The first two articles provide nuanced ways of looking at the complexities of ecofeminism in India. “Ecofeminist Literary Pedagogy in India: A Route Map” by Kalpana Rao Hulluru and Angela Emily Sebastián maps out the current meaning and importance of ecofeminism in India and shows how necessary it is for students to understand how concerns over regionality, climate change and neoliberalism are reflected in ecofeminist writing. They point out that there is little difference as far as oppression is concerned between colonial and pre-colonial Brahmanical patriarchy, thus rendering ecofeminist theories and criticisms highly relevant to Indian society today. The second article that focusses on the topic of ecofeminism is Aina Maria Díaz-Llabrés and Esther Jiménez-Rodríguez’s “Women and Nature: Active Agents in Amitav Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide* and *Sea of Poppies*. An Ecofeminist Reading”. The authors single out two female characters from the two novels and analyze the deep connections between women and nature. They argue that Ghosh portrays them as active agents of resistance, capable of rebelling against their oppression and at the same time bonding spiritually with nature.

Pratheesh Padath explores the experiences and roles of women in his article on the sea fishing community in Alappuzha, Kerala. In “Beyond the Waves: Ethnic Socio-Cultural

Life and Transforming Women's Roles in the Alappuzha Sea Fishermen Community”, Padath not only describes the traditions and economic activities of this community but he also stresses the cultural norms, employment possibilities and conventions that affect women’s daily lives and the difficulties they face in competing with their male counterparts. The study undertaken by geographers Shahid Jamal, Tenzen Namkha and Khusro Moin, “Climate Change and Livelihood Sustainability in Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir” takes us from the south to the north of India. In their article the authors analyse how climate change has negatively affected the community of the Gandhari valley of Kishtwar district in Jammu and Kashmir as a whole and call for an increase in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem welfare.

Remaining in Kashmir and now from a sociological perspective, Irshad Ahmad Shah, Shameem Ahamad Ganayee and Mohmad Saleem Jahangir discuss questions of survival and resilience during the Covid 19 pandemic. Their article, “Navigating Hardships: A Phenomenological Study of Pain, Struggle, and Survival of Daily Wagers in Kashmir amid Catastrophes” analyses the grave situation of many daily wage earners during the lockdown through the interviews they conducted. They discovered that the pandemic affected these people exceptionally hard as not only did they lose their work and their children’s schooling was disrupted but they were also prey to mental stress and family violence.

On a very different note, Tarik Anowar and Ashraf Karim analyze Piers Moore Ede’s work on the city of Varanasi. Their article “Travel Writing as Cultural Bridge: A Study of *Kaleidoscope City* and the Representation of Varanasi in Piers Moore Ede’s Travelogue” seeks to vindicate travel writing as they argue that Ede’s work is an example of how the genre has moved on from exoticising foreign places and, instead, serves as what they call a cultural bridge between different peoples. Anowar and Karim praise Ede’s holistic approach as he refuses to shy away from the darker side of the city.

Alfonso Ojeda-Marín contrasts an unusual historical event from the Indian and the Spanish archives. The missionary Jerome Xavier wrote about an ape in the court of the Emperor Jahangir that appeared to have miraculous skills. In his article, “El manuscrito inédito del jesuita Jerónimo Xavier sobre los prodigios de un mono en la corte de Jahangir.

Su contraste con las versiones inglesas”, Ojeda-Marín speculates over the truth of the event which even today remains a curiosity. Issues of faith in the divine forms the backbone of Sabin Pandey and Yamuna Sharma’s article “From Tradition to Modernity: The Changing Dynamics of Faith Healing in Sikkim” in which they explore the situation of faith healers in Sikkim. They observe that while faith healing remains an integral aspect of cultural identity in this state, the younger generations are gradually moving away and turning to mainstream medical solutions. Pandey and Sharma advocate for preserving traditional methods within the Sikkim healthcare system. Likewise, the preservation of Indian heritage forms part of Sara Fernández Jubín’s article on the pictorial legacy and, possible rehabilitation and revitalization of the Rāy Pravīṇ Mahal. Her article “Estudio y rescate de los murales de Rāy Pravīṇ Mahal: un palacio indio entre dos culturas” was awarded the prize for best MA dissertation by the Spanish Association for Interdisciplinary Studies on India in 2024.

Following the academic articles we have four reviews, two of which discuss the same book. Sergio Díaz Menéndez reviews the Spanish translation by Carmen Escobedo of Ranu Uniyal’s latest collection of poems, *The Day We Went Strawberry-Picking in Scarborough*. Lucero Jazmín López Olivares analyses the collections of essays on the 19th and 20th century representations of India in the volume *India en Hispanoamérica: Historia y variaciones de un imaginario cultural*, edited by Óscar Figueroa and Lía Rodríguez de la Vega. Finally, two reviews explore the book edited by Danielle Hanson entitled *Sightlines: View Points on Susheel Kumar Sharma’s The Door is Half-Open*. Zehara Jabeen vindicates Sharma as a leading contemporary poet in her meticulous analysis of the essays while Pradip Mondal remarks on Sharma’s intriguing combination of political consciousness and spirituality.

I wish to conclude this short editorial by thanking all the scholars in India studies who have contributed to this new issue of *Indialogs*. The reviewers, copyeditors and deputy editors all do a magnificent job doing what is, to all extents and purposes, a labour of love. Without their dedication the journal would not have achieved the high standard that it enjoys today.