

Editorial

The interplay between memory, medicine, and literature has long been a fertile ground for interdisciplinary exploration. Memory, as a cognitive and cultural phenomenon, shapes individual and collective identities, while medicine seeks to understand, heal, and sometimes manipulate memory. Literature, as a reflective and imaginative medium, captures the complexities of memory and its intersections with health, illness, and healing. This interdisciplinary initiative seeks to bring together scholars from diverse fields—including literary studies, medical humanities, cultural studies, history, psychology, neuroscience, and beyond—to critically examine how memory, as both a cognitive and cultural construct, mediates and is mediated by medical practices and literary representations. Memory occupies a central role in shaping individual and collective identities, influencing how we perceive, narrate, and make sense of health, illness, and healing. Medicine, as a discipline, engages with memory in myriad ways, from diagnosing and treating memory-related disorders to grappling with the ethical implications of memory manipulation. Literature, as a reflective and imaginative medium, captures the complexities of memory, offering nuanced explorations of its fragility, resilience, and transformative potential. This issue aims to foster a deeper understanding of the dynamic interplay between these domains, highlighting their mutual influence and the broader implications for both scholarly and practical contexts.

Jayaprakash's article "Memory's Collapse and Corporeal Decay: Trauma, Neuroscience, and Medical Humanities in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*" discusses the possibilities of reading an absurdist drama from an interdisciplinary perspective of medical humanities. While the play is known for its existential queries and dilemmas portrayed through the tramps Vladimir and Estragon, Jayaprakash contends that the existential trauma the play depicts is evocative of the memory failure the characters experience. In "Cities as Cognitive Maps: Memory, Mind, and Mental Health in Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*", Shinoj analyses Italo Calvino's work *Invisible Cities*. Calvino's use of imagined cities serves as external manifestations of various mental processes associated with memory, including recollection, repetition, fragmentation, and cognitive overload, and that they can be considered an environment, or a space in which people can live with the implications of these memory processes. Rather than displaying illness through clinical realism, *Invisible Cities* provides spatial representations of the states of individuals thus making memory a part of the inhabitable spaces formed by the individual's mental condition, and memory creates a fragile balance between the individual's capacity to remember and forget.

Shyam's article "*Aatujeevitham* and Reification of Memories: Diaspora Experiences in Malayalam Cinema" examines the portrayal of the reification of memories in *Aatujeevitham*, both the novel (2007) and the film (2024), using the framework of memory studies to comprehend how preserving memories aids in Najeeb's survival in the desert. Poorna Pushkala and Nibu Thomson in "Mapping Mental Illness: A Kleinmanian Reading of Jerry Pinto's *Em and the Big Hoom*" analyses Jerry Pinto's novel *Em and the Big Hoom* through Arthur Kleinman's concept of illness, which distinguishes between the biomedical understanding of disease and the lived experience of illness shaped by social, cultural, and emotional factors. Reshma and Nibu Thomson in "Embodied Vulnerability and the Precarity of Being: A Merleau-Pontian Analysis of Paul Kalanithi's *When Breath Becomes Air*" delves into Kalanithi's narrative through the lens of Merleau-Ponty's Embodiment theory, revealing how his story powerfully illustrates the disruption of bodily perception, motor intentionality, and identity itself.

Lina Mandal in her article "Buried in History, Silenced in Texts: The Erasure of Women Healers from Memory" examines the historical and literary exclusion of female healers, arguing that their knowledge was either diminished, attributed to male counterparts, or demonised as sorcery. Using case studies of figures such as Hildegard of Bingen and Morgan le Fay, this research highlights how institutional biases marginalised women in medicine, both in medieval Europe and in contemporary times. The paper further explores how the victimisation of modern female doctors—such as the tragic cases of Dr Tilottoma and Dr Priyanka Reddy—demonstrates the continuation of this suppression.

Varsha Sharma in "Inherited Scars: Exploring the Persistence and Evolution of Trauma in Literature" examines how Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* (2016), and Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) depict intergenerational trauma through symbolic elements such as the spectral figure, the stone, and recurring names. By analysing these symbols, the study explores how trauma manifests cyclically in narratives, shaping identities and legacies while reflecting pain and resilience. Shailesh Vaghela in "Echoes of Erasure: Memory Studies in Postcolonial, Decolonial, and Indigenous Contexts" analyses how memory paradigms intersect and diverge, emphasizing their role in healing historical traumas and envisioning decolonized futures. By situating these discussions within memory studies, the article underscores the transformative power of memory as a tool for justice and liberation. Hasna's article "Gender Equality and Women Status in Islam: An Analytical Study" aims to investigate and explain the principles of equality with a gender perspective and women position in Islam.