

MAHARASHTRA NATIONAL
LAW UNIVERSITY MUMBAI



A Course on

FAITH, PANDEMIC AND
REASON: TEXTS AND
CONTEXTS

Register by October 15, 2021:

<https://forms.gle/BBtbGhyohaoVRb839>

*Patron: Prof. (Dr.) Dilip Ukey, Vice Chancellor
Co-Patron: Prof. (Dr.) Anil G. Variath, Registrar*

For enquiries

Contact: 94322 80612

Email:

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MODE: GOOGLE MEET

OCTOBER 20-29, 2021

TOTAL HOURS

15 [12 compulsory hours + 3 optional hours for writing a response paper]

CREDIT

1 [for those completing the full 15-hour course]
All participants will be awarded a completion certificate after 12 hours

WHO CAN APPLY

The course is open for all, but primarily aimed at undergraduate students from the humanities and social sciences streams, and also those from other streams with strong interest in cultural, social issues.

COURSE OUTLINE

- 20 October 2021 : Nature and Scope of the Course
- 21 October 2021 : Faith, Public Health and Human Rights
- 22 October 2021 : Indian Constitution and Scientific Temperament
- 23 October 2021 : Act of Gods and Pandemics: Religio-Historical Narratives
- 25 October 2021 : Imperialism, Disgust and Fear: Colonial Reports of Indian Public Health
- 26 October 2021 : Indian Responses: Critique and Nationalism
- 27 October 2021 : The Tragedy of Faith
- 28 October 2021 : Public Health, Image and Text
- 29 October 2021 : Who Heals? Pandemic Goddesses and Inoculations in India

Timings: 5-6pm on 6 days, 5-7pm on 3 days (tentative)

ABOUT THE COURSE

In both popular and academic thinking, reason and faith appear as absolute binaries. We often see our own age as one inspired and guided by reason and rational order. Our institutions of governance, judiciary, and research advance a spirit of critique and inquiry over adherence to dogma. And yet, as public behaviour during the pandemic has shown, the tension between the two is far from settled. In both waves of the pandemic in India, religious gatherings proceeded despite rising infections and protests by healthcare workers, medical experts and the civil society. That said, India of course is no stranger to this tenuous relation between faith and reason. A sizeable body of colonial literature from the country displays, for instance, the mix of horror, fascination and disgust underlining the western gaze of 'native' rituals and pilgrimages despite the spread of infectious, life-threatening diseases. Responses from the emerging Indian intelligentsia ranged likewise from measured support for the western, rational standpoint to outright resistance against attempts of interference in matters of faith.

In this context, it might prove especially interesting to revisit some of these past and current debates and events from the lens of justice, interfaith relations as well as the reason v/s religion binary. The legal system in India today and attendant notions of justice draw heavily from western notions of fairness, rationality and public order while also translating these into idioms and notions more rooted in Indian contexts. The course uses this as a point of departure to further explore intercultural encounters, engagements between faiths, and implications of the religion v/s reason debate in public health interventions, especially in times of crises like a pandemic. Readings for the course are cross-disciplinary and cater to multiple interests including literature, cultural studies, philosophy and law.

ABOUT THE FACILITATORS

Abhijit Rohi is an Assistant Professor of Law at MNLU Mumbai. He holds his Masters from NUJS, Kolkata and is pursuing his doctoral research from NLSIU Bengaluru. At MNLU Mumbai, he offers courses on Human Rights, Jurisprudence, Media Law and Privacy Law.

Milind B. Gawai is an Assistant Professor of Law at MNLU Mumbai. He has ten years of experience as an Assistant Professor (Law). He also worked as Research Fellow (Faculty) at National Judicial Academy, Bhopal for more than a year. He offers courses on Constitutional Law, Administrative Law, CPC and Affirmative Action.

Upamanyu Sengupta (Coordinator) teaches English at MNLU Mumbai. His research interests include narrative theory, studies of space and place, hermeneutics and Anglo-Indian Studies.

Ashok Chikte is an Assistant Professor of English at MNLU Mumbai. He has published many articles in reputed national and international journals. He has also participated in several national and international conferences and seminars. His interests range from Creative Writing to Fine Arts and Music. He teaches Law and Literature, Academic Writing and Bridge Courses in English.

Omkar Bhatkar is a Sociologist with a doctoral thesis dealing in Proxemics and Social Ecology. His academic interests include Cultural Studies, Phenomenology, Film Theory, Aesthetics and Visual Communication, Gender Studies, Existentialism and Inter-religious Studies. He is a visiting professor at St. Andrew's College and SK Somaiya College and the Co-Founder and Head of St. Andrew's Centre for Philosophy and Performing Arts. He is a Playwright and is the Artistic Director of Metamorphosis Theatre Inc.

Nilanjan Dey (Teaching Assistant) is a fourth-year student pursuing B.A. LL.B. in MNLU Mumbai. Their research interests include critical theory, anthropology of the state and queer theory.

FEES AND REGISTRATION

Course fee (for external participants only): INR 500
Please attach payment receipt while filling the registration form.

Bank details for payment of registration fee -

Bank : Punjab National Bank
Branch : Powai
Address : B1, Lgl-34 Galleria Hiranandani Grd Powai 400076
Account Name : Maharashtra National Law University Mumbai
Account No. : 8709000100017230
IFSC Code : PUNB0063210

Limited seats!