

DEPARTMENT OF AESTHETICS AND PHILOSOPHY

THE ENGLISH AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD

Course title	KEY ASPECTS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL, LITERARY AND AESTHETIC THOUGHT
Category	New Course
Course code	MAAPHE 616
Semester	Semester III, August – December 2026
Number of credits	4 credits
Maximum intake	30
Day/Time	Tuesday and Thursday 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm
Name of the teacher	Dr. SREEDHARAN. T.
Course description	This integrated course explores the profound interconnections between Indian philosophy, literature, and aesthetics, demonstrating how these three domains have historically co-evolved in the Indian intellectual tradition. The study will examine how philosophical ideas shaped literary forms and aesthetic theories, while aesthetic experiences served as pathways to philosophical realization. The course offers a comprehensive and immersive examination of the intellectual, literary, and artistic traditions of the Indian subcontinent. Far from being “relics of the past,” Indian systems of thought provide a sophisticated framework for understanding consciousness, language, and the nature of reality. The course will navigate the intersections of <i>Darsana</i> (philosophy/seeing), <i>Sahitya</i> (literature), and <i>Kavya-Sastra</i> (poetics) to see how ancient insights continue to shape contemporary discourse on ethics and aesthetics. The course will investigate how fundamental questions about existence, ethics, and consciousness are expressed not only through rigorous philosophical treatises but also woven seamlessly into epic poetry, drama, and aesthetic theory. With the aid of primary and secondary sources—that is, literary, critical, philosophical texts and concepts—the participants will (a) critically evaluate how philosophy informs literary expression and aesthetic theory (b) develop skills to locate shaping ideas and traditions within broader historical and cultural contexts (c) generate comparative perspectives on classical and post-classical texts using the lens or frame of modern concerns and approaches. LEARNING OUTCOMES: • To develop critical understanding of metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and aesthetic questions in Indian thought. • To establish connections between philosophical ideas and their literary/aesthetic expressions.

	• To analyze core concepts across Indian <i>darsanas</i> and their influence on literature, philosophy and art. • To explain central concepts of Indian aesthetics and poetics (<i>rasa</i>, <i>bhāva</i>, <i>dhvani</i>, <i>alankāra</i>, <i>rīti</i>, <i>sāhṛdaya</i>, <i>auchitya</i>) and trace their development across major texts. To understand foundational Indian aesthetic theories, particularly the <i>Rasa</i> and <i>Dhvani</i> frameworks, and apply them to various artistic expressions. • To distinguish between “Indian aesthetics” (experience-oriented) and “Indian poetics” (text-oriented) and show how they are interrelated. • To familiarise with the narrative structures, ethical dilemmas, and philosophical underpinnings of classical Indian literature and epics. • To develop cross-cultural critical thinking skills by engaging with non-Western hermeneutic approaches and aesthetic standards and to construct well-reasoned arguments comparing Indian philosophical and aesthetic frameworks with Western equivalents.
Course delivery	Lecture and discussion
Evaluation scheme	Internal Assessment: 40% Written examination (40 marks) Final Assessment: 60% Written examination (60 marks)
Reading List	<i>Indian Literature: An Introduction</i> Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad, <i>India: Life, Myth, Art</i> Jonardon Ganeri, <i>The Oxford Handbook of Indian Philosophy</i> Mini Chandran & V.S. Sreenath. <i>An Introduction to Indian Aesthetics: History, Theory, Theoreticians</i> Sheldon Pollock, <i>A Rasa Reader: Classical Indian Aesthetics</i> G.N. Devy, <i>Indian Literary Criticism</i>

Course title	NAVAYĀNA BUDDHISM: AMBEDKAR, MODERNITY, AND THE REIMAGINING OF DHARMA
Category	Existing Course with changes/New course
Course code	MAAPHE613
Semester	III
Number of credits	4
Maximum intake	30
Day/Time	Monday / Wednesday 11.00 to 1.00
Name of the teacher	Dr. Santosh Raut
Course description	What does it mean to take up Buddhist practice as an act of liberation — not only for oneself, but for all beings? In this teaching class, we explore the life, vision, and enduring legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the towering Indian jurist, philosopher, Buddhist teacher, and social reformer who saw in the Buddha's teaching a radical answer to one of humanity's oldest and most entrenched forms of suffering. Ambedkar's Navayāna Buddhism calls us to recognize that caste, race, gender — and all systems of hierarchy and exclusion — are constructions of mind, and that the cultivation of awareness, compassion, and courageous action can dissolve what centuries of convention have made to seem fixed and eternal. Drawing on his core insight that indifference is among the gravest afflictions a society can suffer, and that nothing is permanent, nothing beyond transformation, this class invites practitioners of all backgrounds to consider how the Dhamma might deepen and widen their engagement with the great work of justice, dignity, and social harmony in our time. What makes Dr. Ambedkar's approach to Buddhism truly unique is its profound relevance to the world's deepest needs today — for a harmonious society, for genuine equality, and for what he envisioned as a deep democracy rooted not merely in law, but in the human heart. Even in the darkest of conditions, he held firm to the conviction that new relationships, new communities, and a new world are possible — and that the Buddha's teachings show us the way. For Ambedkar, BuddhaDhamma was nothing less than a revolution: one that transforms the self and society together, from the inside out, planting the seeds of dignity and freedom in every mind that takes it up. His vision speaks with urgent clarity to our fractured present, reminding us that the path to collective liberation begins

	with the quality of attention, care, and courage we bring to each moment of practice. Learning Outcomes By the end of this seminar, students will be able to: • Critically analyze Ambedkar’s The Buddha and His Dhamma as a work of religious reconstruction, situating it within his broader intellectual biography and the history of Buddhist modernism. • Assess the theological, sociological, and political dimensions of Navayana Buddhism, including its claims on Pali sources and its departures from canonical tradition. Navayana Buddhism: Ambedkar, Modernity, and the Reimagining of Dharma — Graduate Seminar Page • Situate Navayana within comparative frameworks including engaged Buddhism, liberation theology, Black liberation theology, and religious nationalism. • Engage with Dalit studies and subaltern studies as methodological orientations, understanding their implications for the study of religion. • Evaluate scholarly debates over “Protestant Buddhism,” Buddhist modernism, and the politics of religious authenticity. • Produce original graduate-level research at the intersection of religion, social theory, and South Asian studies.
Course delivery	Lecture and discussion
Evaluation scheme	Internal Assessment: 40% Written examination (40 marks) Final Assessment: 60% Written examination (60 marks)
Reading List	Required Texts • Ambedkar, B. R. The Buddha and His Dhamma: A Critical Edition. Ed. Aakash Singh Rathore and Ajay

	Verma. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011. • Ambedkar, B. R. Annihilation of Caste: The Annotated Critical Edition. Ed. S. Anand; intro. Arundhati Roy. London: Verso, 2014. • Zelliott, Eleanor. Ambedkar's World: The Making of Babasaheb and the Dalit Movement. New Delhi: Navayana, 2013. • Queen, Christopher S., and Sallie B. King, eds. Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia. Albany: SUNY Press, 1996. • Omvedt, Gail. Buddhism in India: Challenging Brahminism and Caste. New Delhi: Sage, 2003. • Beltz, Johannes. Mahar, Buddhist and Dalit: Religious Conversion and Socio-Political Emancipation. New Delhi: Manohar, 2005.
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