

DEPARTMENT OF AESTHETICS AND PHILOSOPHY

THE ENGLISH AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD

Course title	LITERARY TEXTS, PHILOSOPHICAL SUBTEXTS
Category	Existing Course with changes
Course code	MAAPHE 505
Semester	Semester I, August – December 2026
Number of credits	4 credits
Maximum intake	30
Day/Time	Monday and Wednesday 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm
Name of the teacher	Dr. SREEDHARAN. T.
Course description	Literature and philosophy have long been intertwined, each enriching the other in profound ways. Both philosophy and literature share a concern for the great and small truths of human existence, the ways in which we <i>make</i> and <i>lose</i> meaning. Aristotle’s memorable contention that poetry is closer to philosophy than to history, for “poetry tends to speak of universals,” underscores such a perspective. The main intent of the course is to show how reading literary works with a desire to unravel the philosophical underpinnings can throw light on the complex, nuanced, fraught and textured social, psychological, cultural, political and existential domains. Such an engagement will compel us to consider the issues related to: language, emotions, ethics, and aesthetics; truth, freedom, and agency; subjectivity and identity; bondage and transcendence; commitment and responsibility; justice and judgement; repression, suppression, and expression; power and resistance; creativity, narcissism, totalitarianism, etc. With the aid of select literary texts, the course will attempt to explore the philosophical concerns and questions implicit in them. The following texts, among others, will be taken up for study: T.S. Eliot, <i>The Waste Land</i> Samuel Beckett, <i>Waiting for Godot</i> Rainer Maria Rilke, <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i> Gustav Janouch, <i>Conversations with Kafka</i> Masanobu Fukuoka, <i>One Straw Revolution</i> Jeyamohan, <i>A Hundred Arm Chairs</i>

	Aubrey Menen, <i>The Space Within the Heart</i> Osip Mandelstam, "Stalin Epigram" Learning Outcomes: 1. To comprehend literature's ability to bridge the gap between abstract philosophical thought and concrete human experience. To explain the relationship between the works discussed, the cultures in which they were created, and the human concerns they illuminate. 2. To understand how philosophy provides literature with a framework for exploring profound questions about existence, morality, reality, and knowledge. To examine the relation of literary discourse to that of politics, morality, myth, history, and science. 3. To develop an understanding of (i) human motivation, (ii) the mental processing of perceptions, (iii) how we frame our conceptions of reality (vi) how we enlarge or constrict our cognitive and affective register, acquire and reinforce beliefs. The ability to differentiate and analyse the following: (a) philosophy <i>on</i> literature: philosophical approaches to the understanding of literary texts (issues of truth, authorship, selfhood); (b) philosophy <i>in</i> literature: literary texts that explicitly invoke philosophical problems or approaches, particularly those belonging to the ethical domain; (c) philosophy <i>as</i> literature: problems raised by certain philosophical texts whose proper use requires careful attention to their form.
Course delivery	Lecture and discussion
Evaluation scheme	Internal Assessment: 40% Written examination (40 marks) Final Assessment: 60% Written examination (60 marks)
Reading List	P.C. Hogan. <i>Philosophical Approaches to the Study of Literature</i>. J.L. Bell. <i>Philosophy in Literature</i>. D.G. Marshall. <i>Literature As Philosophy: Philosophy As Literature</i>. <i>The Palgrave Handbook of Philosophy and Literature</i>.

Course title	BEYOND THE POSSIBLE: EXPLORING IMAGINATION
Category	Existing Course with changes/New course
Course code	MAAPHE521
Semester	Semester I, August – December 2026
Number of credits	4 credits
Maximum intake	30
Day/Time	Tuesday and Friday / 11.00 am to 1.00 pm
Name of the teacher	Dr. Santhosh Raut
Course description	Imagination occupies a peculiar threshold in human thought: it is neither pure reason nor mere fantasy, neither perception nor invention. It is the faculty through which the possible exceeds the actual, through which the unseen is made visible, and through which the bounded world opens onto the infinite. Yet across the world's great intellectual traditions, imagination has been theorized in radically different ways — as cognitive faculty, as spiritual organ, as political force, as aesthetic ground, as ontological bridge between the human and the divine. Beyond the Possible: Exploring Imagination is a research-oriented course that brings together thinkers from ancient India, classical Greece, medieval Islamic and Sufi thought, Buddhist philosophy, Renaissance Europe, German Idealism, and twentieth- and twenty-first-century Continental and postcolonial theory. Rather than surveying imagination as a unified concept, the course traces imagination as a site of contestation — between intellect and intuition, between the sacred and the secular, between individual creativity and collective myth, between the knowable and the transcendent. Students will engage primary texts in philosophy, poetics, theology, political thought, and literary theory, asking how imagination functions differently when it is understood as <i>kalpanā</i> / <i>pratibhā</i> in Sanskrit/Pali aesthetics, as <i>khayāl</i> in Sufi metaphysics, as <i>phantasia</i> in Aristotelian psychology, as <i>Einbildungskraft</i> in Kant and Schelling, or as the 'imaginal' (<i>mundus imaginalis</i>) in the phenomenology of Henry Corbin. They will examine how imagination is not simply a mental event but a world-making power — one that generates mythology, founds political communities, enables compassion, and opens consciousness to what lies beyond ordinary cognition. The course is interdisciplinary by design. Each module draws on philosophy, aesthetics, religious thought, literary theory, and politics simultaneously, refusing the disciplinary boundaries that might artificially constrain imagination's range. Students are expected to read across traditions with rigour, intellectual generosity, and a willingness to let unfamiliar frameworks genuinely challenge their assumptions.

	Learning outcomes: Students will be able to: ■ Critically analyse major theories of imagination across Indian, Islamic, Buddhist, Greek, and European traditions ■ Engage primary texts in philosophy, poetics, theology, and political theory with scholarly precision ■ Trace the historical transformations of imagination as a concept from antiquity to the contemporary moment ■ Articulate the relationship between imagination and other faculties — reason, perception, memory, emotion, and will ■ Situate theories of imagination within broader questions of ethics, politics, religion, and aesthetics ■ Produce original research that brings multiple traditions into productive dialogue.
Course delivery	Lecture and discussion
Evaluation scheme	Internal Assessment: 40% Written examination (40 marks) Final Assessment: 60% Written examination (60 marks)
• Selected Reading List • Readings are dynamic and subject to modification as the course evolves.	1. Plato. <i>Republic</i>. Books VI–VII (the Divided Line and the Allegory of the Cave); Book X 2. Plato. <i>Sophist</i>. 246a–264b (on image-making and appearance) 3. Plato. <i>Ion</i>. Complete 4. Aristotle. <i>De Anima</i>. Books II–III, esp. 427a–429a (on phantasia) 5. Aristotle. <i>De Memoria et Reminiscentia</i>. Complete 6. Aristotle. <i>Poetics</i>. Complete 7. Bharata Muni. <i>Nāṭyaśāstra</i>. Chapters 6–7 (Rasasūtra and Bhāvasūtra), trans. Manomohan Ghosh 8. Nāgārjuna. <i>Mūlamadhyamakakārikā</i>. Chapters 1, 15, 24–25, trans. Jay Garfield 9. Asvaghosa. <i>Buddhacarita</i>. Books I–IV, XIV, trans. Patrick Olivelle, Clay Sanskrit Library 10. Vasubandhu. <i>Viṃśatikā (Twenty Verses)</i>. trans. Stefan Anacker, in <i>Seven Works of Vasubandhu</i> 11. Garfield, Jay. <i>The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way</i>. Oxford University Press, 1995 — Introduction 12. Lusthaus, Dan. <i>Buddhist Phenomenology</i>. RoutledgeCurzon, 2002 — Part I, Chapters 1–3 13. Ibn Sīnā / Avicenna (Kitāb al-Nafs, Risālah fī Māhiyyat al-‘Ishq) 14. Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (Masnavi, Dīwān-i Shams) 15. Mirzā Asadullāh Khān Ghālīb (Dīwān-i Ghālīb) 16. Henry Corbin (L’Imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d’Ibn ‘Arabī) 17. Kant, Immanuel. <i>Critique of Judgement</i>. §§1–29, 43–54, trans. Werner

	Pluhar 17. Schiller, Friedrich. <i>On the Aesthetic Education of Man</i>. Letters 1–6, 14–16, 22–27, trans. Elizabeth Wilkinson and L.A. Willoughby 18. Coleridge, S.T..<i>Biographia Literaria</i>. Chapters 12–14 19. Blake, William. <i>The Marriage of Heaven and Hell</i>. Complete; Jerusalem, Plates 1–4 20. Taylor, Charles. <i>Modern Social Imaginaries</i>. Duke University Press, 2004 — Chapters 1–5 21. Fanon, Frantz. <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i>. Chapters 1, 5, 7, trans. Richard Philcox
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