



Concept Note

International Seminar

"Religion and Gender: Beliefs, Practices, & Beyond"

Organised by

Centre for Study and Research (CSR) New Delhi

In collaboration with

**Department of Women Education, Maulana Azad
National Urdu University, Hyderabad**

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Gender and gender role is one of the important themes discussed by all the major religions of the world. The study of gender and religion stems from a broader interest in profound epistemological, methodological, and substantive changes that contemporary gender studies and studies in religion have produced over the last thirty years. This seminar tries to explore the ways that religious belief and practices influences both male and female behavior as well as their respective roles in society. New or expanding scholarly interest in these issues has emerged within scientific domains from the last quarter of the 20th century that primarily belong to theology and religious studies.¹ Religion(s) have become the object of study in a variety of academic disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. This Seminar attests to this growing common interest to (re)connect the study of religion to current Indian social and political questions, moral concerns and lived spirituality.

Concurrently the rise of feminist movements alongside the human right movements have challenged the classical narratives pertaining to biological sexuality, gender, gender identity gender-based rights, gender roles etc.

While patriarchal relations are central to many global religions, this is not a universal principle. Some religious orders emphasize cooperation and respect for women over hierarchy. Others may prioritize male leadership but at the same time provide women with types of ethical identities and spiritual positions that create spaces for women to practice their own agency and forms of power. A broad literature exists exploring female submission and agency within patriarchal religious spaces, much of which challenges liberal assumptions that what individuals need is freedom. Thus, diverse religions display a variety of gendered systems.²

We find the discourse on religion and gender as an initiator for opening up new debates because of their destabilizing nature. Both 'religion' and 'gender' are not static phenomena but are involved in ongoing and complex processes of evolution. As a consequence, the study of religion and gender has a high heuristic value.

To summarize, we would like to explore in this seminar the relation, confrontation, and intersection of gender and religion, taking into account the multiple and changing manifestations of religion in Indian social and cultural contexts. We also aim to explore the current major challenges for the study of religion and gender so as to address them with the alternative paradigm of purposeful, holistic, and value-based knowledge in the complex dynamics of religion and gender in our contemporary world.

The seminar will also seek healthy and civil discussion and debate on the theme essentially respecting the diverse religious beliefs, cultural practices, and narratives.

References:

1. Korte, A. (2011). Openings: A Genealogical Introduction to Religion and Gender, *Religion and Gender*, 1(1), 1-17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/18785417-0010100122>
2. James, S. B. (Ed.). (2019, January 15). Gender & religion OBO. Retrieved September 8, 2022, from <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-202.xml#:~:text=obo%2F9780199766567%2D0202-,Introduction,and%20religion%20have%20been%20developed.>

Themes

- Gender roles and different religions
- Gender-based discrimination and religious narratives
- Gender Identity: Looking through a religious lens
- Religious perspectives on Gender Justice
- Lived spirituality, Unstructured Religions, and Gender discourse
- Intersectionality, Gender, and Religion
- Men, Masculinity, and Religion
- Religion and Embodiment



27TH
OCT. 2022



10:00
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