Law has an abiding concern with crisis. More precisely, it is concerned with managing crisis, preventing it, absorbing or distributing its consequences. Legal claims, litigations, and legislations can be said to arise from crisis and are in themselves crises, moments of decision or judgment. The possibility of crisis in human society thus emerges as the precondition for law. A time of crisis—whether personal or communal, social or ecological, economic or epidemiological—is when the law is expected to act at its most ‘normal’; the predictability of law is a defence against the unpredictability of crisis. At a ‘micro’ level, the law presents itself as entirely authoritative and equipped to deal with crisis. In times of ‘macro’ level crisis, the paradox of law is that it is most urgently called upon precisely when its institutional frameworks are most vulnerable.

To speak of law in crisis is to turn one’s gaze on the internal coherence and efficacy of the law itself. At the same time, it implies thinking of law in historical terms. If by crisis we here mean a turning point, a state of uncertainty and risk, in what sense could one speak of law being in crisis? What kind of normative approach does such an assertion involve? Would it necessarily imply an anterior or future moment in which law was not, or will no longer be, in crisis? Is it possible to address these questions within law’s own conceptual and linguistic framework?

To speak of law as crisis would require us to speak from a vantage that does not separate law and crisis—both conceptually and historically. Rather, crisis then becomes not just the precondition but the reified form that law takes. Here law cannot be understood as a phenomenon that is in a relationship of linear temporality with crisis but where they are co-constitutive of each other. What is at stake when law and crisis share a mimetic existence? What might happen to any promise of transformation of a crisis that law might hold out when crisis masquerades as law?

For its Spring 2022 issue, the Jindal Global Law Review invites papers that explore the multifaceted relationship between law and crisis. How does law respond to crisis as event and
as experience? How well is its promise of predictability lived up to in times of catastrophe? How well are law’s other promises—equality, welfare, justice—kept in times of crisis? What is the social impact of law’s response to crisis? How does this response affect existing hierarchies of class, caste, gender, ability, sexuality, and how is it conditioned by them? How do legal discourses of accountability, transparency, separation of powers, and rule of law circulate in moments of crisis? How, if at all, do moments of crisis help us critique legal institutions and processes? These are some of the questions that potential contributors could address. We also welcome theoretical contributions that explore the conceptual relationship between law and crisis. Is the ‘state of exception’ fundamental to our understanding of law? Is it possible to conceive of law without the ever-present possibility of crisis? What is the connection between law, crisis, and justice?

As a law review with a critical and inter-disciplinary orientation, we welcome contributions across disciplines, jurisdictions and forms, with a particular interest in academic works that critically examine current events with historical traction. Along with full-length academic articles, we also welcome other forms such as case-notes, book reviews, review essays, long-form interviews, photo-essays, and field reports.

Please submit a 300-word abstract by 15 July, 2021. Decisions on accepted abstracts will be announced by 30 July, 2021. Complete articles will be due on 30 November, 2021.

Please send abstracts and any queries to jglr@jgu.edu.in with carbon copies to asagar@jgu.edu.in and osircar@jgu.edu.in.

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Founded in 2009, Jindal Global Law Review (JGLR) is the faculty-edited flagship journal of the Jindal Global Law School. JGLR is published twice a year, with each issue curated as a themed dossier on a specific area of both historical and contemporary significance to law. We publish peer-reviewed interdisciplinary and critical legal scholarship—with a focus on the Global South—by academics in law and cognate disciplines that take the conventional and the creative seriously.
JGLR is especially interested in publishing works that expand and reimagine the boundaries of the legal discipline through innovations in method and form. We understand ‘law’ expansively as an assemblage of ideas, theories, methods, concepts, norms, traditions, politics, moralities, aesthetics, doctrines, policies, pluralities, and life practices.

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