

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

GOD IN THE CAGE OF POETRY: HYMNS IN EASY SANSKRIT - 35113

Last update 11-12-2013

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Asian Studies

Academic year: 1

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Yigal Bronner

Coordinator Email: yigal.bronner@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Staff:

Prof Yigal Bronner

Course/Module description:

In this class we will read hymns and personal prayers that address a poet's personal deity. The texts will be in easy Sanskrit, and emphasis will be put on developing the skill of fast reading.

Course/Module aims:

The goal of this class is to impart the students with a quick and smooth technique of reading Sanskrit. We will not aim, then, at decoding the text by means of a dictionary, a grammar, transliterating, and translating it (although we will, of course, explain any grammatical questions that may arise), but to get used to reading it just as we read a novel in a second language. Reading is a skill that is acquired through a lot of practice--by reading, rereading, and additional reading--and practice we will: before, after, and during class.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

To read smoothly and quickly an easy Sanskrit text, to acquire confidence when facing a new text, to get used not to copy, transliterate, and translate texts, to become familiar with the stotra genre.

Attendance requirements(%):

85%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Reading and rereading, which require preparation at home on a daily basis and active participating in class.

Course/Module Content:

The course will consist of four parts. We will begin with a short and easy text, the Mahālakṣmī Aṣṭakam, which includes only 8 simple stanzas that we will sing and memorize (1). Then we will turn to a famous hymn to the sun, the Ādityahṛdaya, which appears as an independent poem within the sixth book of the Rāmāyaṇa (2). Our third text will be more philosophical and personal in nature, the Bhaktistotra of Avadhūta, addressed to Śiva (3). Finally, if time allows, we will sample from a more poetic stotra, the beautiful Stutikusumāñjali of the great fourteenth-century Kashmiri poet Jagaddhara.

Required Reading:

For more, see the Moodle site.

Additional Reading Material:

For more, see the Moodle site.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 70 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 10 %

Project work 0 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 20 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

-