



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Rice dal dosa: the history of India on a banana leaf - 35141

Last update 12-03-2025

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Asian Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Rotem Geva

Coordinator Email: rotem.geva2@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Staff:

Prof. Yigal Bronner,
Dr. Rotem Geva Halper

Course/Module description:

What is considered food, how is the cooking done, what is a permissible drink, how and with whom can one dine, how does diet change over time—these are some of the questions that deeply influence our understanding of the history of every society and nation. These are also the questions that we will be asking about India in this seminar. And as is usually the case in India, the answers are particularly intricate (and tasty). In this course we will explore India's history through food. Each week we will discuss one period in India's history through an edible, drinkable, or food-related topic that is pertinent to that period. Each such topic will form a starting point from which to study changes in society and habits that relate to the all-important human activity of finding, cooking, and consuming food (either for survival, pleasure, or ritual purposes).

Course/Module aims:

To enhance students' understanding of Indian history and explore the significance of food as a lens for understanding culture

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

- * To understand and delve into the history of India from ancient times to the present.
- * To become familiar with key concepts in Indian studies.
- * To explore the history of food and its cultural significance.
- * To develop academic writing skills, and the ability to read and analyze primary and secondary sources.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: discussions

Course/Module Content:

See course Moodle for the list

Required Reading:

Selected Bibliography (see course Moodle for a detailed list):

Banerji, Chitrita. *Eating India: An Odyssey into the Food and Culture of the Land of Spices*. Bloomsbury, 2007.

Chatterji, Joya. *Shadows at Noon: The South Asian Twentieth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2023.

Dalby, Andrew *Dangerous Tastes: The Story of Spices*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Ghosh, Madhushree *Khabaar: An Immigrant Journey of Food, Memory, and Family*. Iowa: University Of Iowa Press, 2022.

Lutgendorf, Philip. "Making Tea in India: Chai, Capitalism, Culture." *Thesis Eleven* 113, no. 1: 11-31.

McHugh, James *An Unholy Brew: Alcohol in Indian History and Religions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.

Pieruccini, Cinzia, and Paola M. Rossi, eds. *A World of Nourishment: Reflections on Food in Indian Culture*. Milano: Ledizioni, 2020.

Ray, Krishnendu, and Tulasi Srinivas, eds. *Curried Cultures: Globalization, Food, and South Asia*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2012.

Sen, Colleen Taylor *Feasts and Fasts: A History of Food in India*. Clerkenwell, UK: Reaktion Books, 2015.

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 80 %

Other 20 %

Additional information:

Course Requirements:

1. Full Attendance, Reading, and Active Participation (20%)

❖ *Attendance is mandatory for all sessions. Absences beyond two classes (unless due to military reserve duty, isolation, or other exceptional circumstances with documentation) will result in a grade reduction for this component. Students who miss more than three sessions will not be able to complete the course (except in documented exceptional cases).*

❖ *Reading materials will be available on Moodle. You are required to come to class having read the assigned materials, as class discussions are based on them. Lack of familiarity with the texts and/or failure to participate in discussions will negatively affect this grade component.*

❖ *Submission of 6 Reading Responses – Before each class, a Moodle assignment will open for submitting a short response to the reading. Each student must submit six responses throughout the semester. Responses must be submitted via Moodle no later than 30 minutes before class. These responses are not graded, but submission of all required responses is mandatory to pass the course. Students may not submit two responses in the same week or submit a response in a week when they are submitting a paper.*

2. Two Papers (80%)

Each paper will focus on a topic discussed in that week's session and should be approximately 1,200 words. Papers must be submitted via Moodle by 10:00 AM on the day of the class. No reading response should be submitted in the same week as a paper.