



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Daily Life in Zen Monasteries: A Historical-Anthropological Perspective - 46921

Last update 19-09-2022

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Asian Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Erez Joskovich

Coordinator Email: erezusan@gmail.com

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Erez Joskovich

Course/Module description:

Zen monks dwelling in secluded mountain temples, the lifestyle, discipline, and austere practice have intrigued both Japanese and Western imagination for decades. Early works on the subject, most notably by D.T. Suzuki, have idealized the contemplative life in the monks' hall (sōdō) as a manifestation of the authentic Zen tradition. This seminar will examine this ideal in the face of monastic life in contemporary Japan through a combination of classical texts and ethnographic materials. Among the questions to be discussed in the course: What sets Zen monasteries apart from other Buddhist monasteries in Asia? What is the place of the rigid discipline and ritualization of daily life in the fulfillment of the Buddhist way? What motivates contemporary men and women who choose a monastery life, and what characterizes their everyday experience? The preoccupation with these and other questions will serve as a general presentation of the Zen tradition and the Buddhist establishment in contemporary Japan and help formulate an independent research problem on which to write a concluding paper

Course/Module aims:

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

At the end of the course, students will be able to write an independent research paper based on primary and secondary sources.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

- 1) Sources for the study of monastic life in contemporary Japan and research methods
- 2) Vinaya and nuns in Buddhism and the Chan tradition
- 3) Zen monastery life in China and Japan from the 12th century to modern times.

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- 4) *Daily life in a Zen monastery*
5) *Zen monks and priests image versus reality*
(*Issues of tradition versus innovation, ideal versus duty and livelihood, gender, foreigners, and Zen nuns in the West*)

Required Reading:

A variety of secondary sources from research literature and primary sources from the lecturer's field research.

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 20 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 70 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: