

Reading Religion in South Asia I (A006807)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 6.0

Study time 180 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)

English, Hindi

Gent

independent work

lecture

seminar

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

De Clercq, Eva

LW21

lecturer-in-charge

Vekemans, Tine

LW21

co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

[Master of Science in Teaching in Languages\(main subject Oriental Languages and Cultures\)](#)

6

A

[Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures\(main subject India\)](#)

6

A

[Exchange Programme Oriental Languages and Cultures](#)

6

A

Teaching languages

Hindi, English

Keywords

Jainism, religion in India, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha, Hindi, Gujarati, manuscripts, text and ethnography

Position of the course

This course focuses on different aspects of Jainism, in South Asia and beyond, especially based on primary sources in the most significant languages of Jainism, including Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha, Hindi and Gujarati. Each year, specific topics are addressed in separate modules. The material is framed in broader ongoing academic discourses on South Asian religious and literary culture.

Contents

- 1 Introduction to Jain Prakrit, Apabhramsha, old Hindi and/or Gujarati language (grammar) and literature.
- 2 Reading, analysing, and contextualizing text fragments from the Jain repertoire.
- 3 Framing of the texts within the broader religious and literary context of Jainism.
- 4 Framing of these texts within the broader religious, social, political and literary context of South Asia.
- 5 Framing of these texts against relevant historiographical and ethnographic research.

Initial competences

This course requires a knowledge of Sanskrit or another Indo-Aryan language (at least intermediary level) and of the basics of the religious traditions of India (esp. Jainism and the Hindu traditions).

Final competences

- 1 Have a basic knowledge of Prakrit, Apabhramsha, old Hindi and/or Gujarati language.
- 2 Have a basic knowledge of Jain literature.
- 3 Being able to read and explain the texts discussed in class.
- 4 Being able to sketch the historical frame and relevance of the treated text fragments.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lecture: introduction to languages; background of the texts.

Seminar: language exercises; reading and analysing texts.

Self reliant study: preparation, background literature.

Recordings of the classes are available.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: A Reference Manual of Middle Prakrit Grammar

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Author : Frank Van Den Bossche

Type: Handbook

Name: The Apabhramsa of Svayambhudeva's Paumacariu

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Type: Handouts

Name: Handouts

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

References

- Dundas, Paul. The Jains. London, N.Y. Routledge. 2nd ed. 2002.
- Flood, G. Introduction to Hinduism. Cambridge CUP, 1996
- Pollock, S. Language of the Gods in the World of Men. Berkeley: UCP, 2009

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive support via Ufora (forums, e-mail) or after appointment

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

Assignment: 1. assignments to integrate the content of the classes; 2. final paper

Oral exam

Calculation of the examination mark

- Oral exam (20%)
- Paper: assignments (40%); paper (30%)

- Participation: being present, and thinking along actively during class (10%)

Students who do not take part in the assessment of one or more parts of the course evaluation

(permanent assessment or periodic assessment) or obtain a mark of less than 10/20 for one of its parts cannot pass the course evaluation. Should the average mark be higher than 10/20, the final mark will be reduced to the highest non-pass mark (= 9).

Facilities for Working Students

1 Concerning exemption from educational activities: presence is obligatory

2 Concerning rescheduling of examinations: possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year

3 Concerning alternative time for feedback: feedback can be given by email, telephone or during an appointment during or after office hours

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and Philosophy