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Selected commentaries on the Bhagavad Gītā

I. What the seminar is about

The aim of this seminar is to study selected commentaries on selected passages of the Bhagavad Gītā. In particular, we focus on the commentaries by Śaṅkara, Abhinavagupta, and Bhadrēśadāsa.

The commentarial sections by Śaṅkara, Abhinavagupta, and Bhadrēśadāsa are provided as pdfs (just write an email to one of the two organizers). On top, we will often refer to Tubb and Boose (2007).

The seminar is open to advanced bachelor students and to master students. PhD students are welcome to attend. Participants are expected to take turns in translating the selected portions of the Gītā and of the commentaries and in discussing the finer grammatical points.

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II. Topics

The first meeting will be used to cover

- the Bhagavad Gītā as part of the Mahābhārata,
- the three commentaries and why they were selected,
- some commentatorial techniques,
- reading of BhG 1.1, 14, 21cd-22ab, 31-32ab, 2.7

Ideally, these and other passage have been prepared by each participant before the meeting!!! The idea is to concentrate on difficult grammatical points.

The following meetings concentrate on the following passages of the Gītā together with the corresponding commentaries:

- The body-as-garment argument: BhG 2.19-22 (Abhinavagupta 2.20-23)
- Fighting as a dominant action: BhG 2.31-38 (Abhinavagupta 2.32-39)
- Equanimity: BhG 2.56-57 (Abhinavagupta 2.57-58)
- Acts and consequences: BhG 2.47-49 (Abhinavagupta 2.48-49, 51)

These passages are concerned with human actions and the responsibility for the consequences. The interested reader is directed to Sen (2000) and Wiese (2016).

III. Requirements for earning credits

Students are required to deal with a small self-selected section of the Gītā (other than those covered in class), translate the commentaries (those covered in the classroom and perhaps others), provide grammatical notes on difficult passages, and discuss the manner in which these commentaries deal with the Gītā passage in question.

IV. Publication bibliography

Sen, A. K. (2000): Consequential evaluation and practical reason. In *The Journal of Philosophy* 97, pp. 477–502.

Tubb, Gary A.; Boose, Emery R. (2007): Scholastic Sanskrit. A handbook for students. New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies (Treasury of the Indic sciences series).

Wiese, Harald (2016): A Decision Theorist's Bhagavad Gita. In *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research* 33, pp. 117–136.