



Sanskrit in two scripts: Sharada (from Kashmir in the north) and Grantha (from Tamil Nadu in the south).

SKT 101

Elementary Sanskrit I

Fall 2018
Prof. Tim Lubin

Sanskrit, sister to Greek and Latin and aunt to most of the languages of Europe, was used to compose most Hindu and Buddhist sacred texts, and much other literature of India, including the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* epics, lyric poetry, drama, fables, works on yoga and meditation, poetics, logic, political theory, law (Dharma), the exact sciences, and the erotic arts. The discovery by Western scholars of the remarkably systematic ancient grammar of Panini (around 400 BCE) led to the development of the modern science of linguistics.

The elementary course presents the basic grammar of the language over the course of the year. From the very first day, students will begin reading texts, and using simple spoken Sanskrit. We also discuss the role of Sanskrit in religious history and in Indian and Nepali society up to the present.

Course Materials

The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit, by Antonia Ruppel

A Sanskrit Grammar for Students, by A. A. Macdonell

Antonia Ruppel's CIS resources: <http://cambridge-sanskrit.org/other-resources-links/>

Sanskrit audio files: <http://home.wlu.edu/~lubint/texts/index.htm>

Online dictionaries:

<https://sanskritdictionary.com/>

<http://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/scans/MW72Scan/2014/web/webtc2/index.php>

Inflected form identifier:

<http://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/work/fflexphp/web/index.php>

Schedule

The course will meet three hours per week. We will aim to complete about one to two chapters of the textbook per week, adjusting somewhat for more challenging chapters. The grammar lessons will be augmented by material on Indian culture and history, Sanskrit literature, and the social role of Sanskrit users priests, scholars, and literati.

Class time will be devoted to: (a) presentation of new material: (b) review of assigned readings and exercises, with students taking turns reading and translating, and writing their work on the board; (c) introduction of relevant cultural, historical, literary, and religious background information.

Requirements

An in-class midterm examination (25% of the final grade); a two-hour final examination (50% of the final grade). The remaining 25% will be based on in-class work, considered cumulatively: preparation of weekly assignments, in-class reading and translation, memorization of verses, and occasional short quizzes. Absence from class (for reasons other than serious illness or emergency) tends to make the coursework much more difficult, and could result in a lowering of the final grade.

Goals

The objectives of the course are:

- Mastery of the basic grammar and syntax of Sanskrit by the end of two terms, with the ability to read original texts (such as those in Lanman's *Sanskrit Reader*).
- The ability to recite verse.
- The ability to use basic spoken Sanskrit to analyze compounds (by performing *vigraha* orally) or to chat with pandits.
- Knowledge of the role and status of Sanskrit in Indian society and religion, and a basic familiarity with the extant literature in Sanskrit.