

Sanskrit 281

Intermediate Sanskrit

University of Hawaii at Manoa
Fall 2014

Timing: The Class will meet for 200 minutes per week.

Instructor: Jesse Ross Knutson, PhD
Assistant Professor of Sanskrit,
Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures

Email: jknutson@hawaii.edu

Office: Spalding 452A

Course Description: This course develops fluency in reading a wide range of Sanskrit text genres in addition to their traditional commentaries. It presumes acquaintance with the basic grammar, but also includes review and refinement of grammar, as well as the development of elementary skills in asking and answering commentary-style questions in the language.

Required Text:

Rāmopākhyāna: The Story of Rāma in the Mahābhārata

Recommended Texts:

Apte V.S. *The Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary.*

Whitney, W.D. *The Roots, Verb Forms, and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language.*

Prerequisite: Sanskrit 181 or equivalent.

Objectives:

Student Learning Objectives:

By the end of this class students will:

1. Develop a high degree of confidence and mastery in reading epic Sanskrit
2. Develop a modest repertoire of memorized verses
3. Develop more skills in speaking and understanding simple interpretive Sanskrit (it is a useful skill to be able to ask and answer basic grammatical

questions about a text in Sanskrit, which in turn helps to internalize some of the interpretive styles of the traditional commentaries)

This class is devoted to developing fluency in reading and understanding Sanskrit texts. We begin with a section of the *Mahābhārata*, the *Rāmopākhyāna*, where king Yudhiṣṭhira is told the entire narrative of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by the sage Mārkaṇḍeya. This text is chosen because it is available in a high-quality independent study reader, where vocabulary and other elements are glossed for you, so that you can read more material in a shorter span of time, without having to look everything up in the dictionary. This will give you a chance to build up your reading skills and vocabulary for some time, before jumping into the ‘deep end’ of reading a text with a dictionary.

As we progress, we will read other texts (decided based on your interests, in consultation with you) and the *Rāmopākhyāna* will go from being our main text to being a secondary text, which I will expect you to continue reading on your own, and which we will return to in class from time to time. We will return to the *Rāmopākhyāna* if and when you have questions about it, or to practice sight-reading when we exhaust what you have prepared of other texts. This course will require significant preparation outside of class, and will require you to continually review everything you learned from the first-year course. In return, it will develop your reading skills to a high level so that you will feel very confident next year in an advanced level seminar, as well as in reading texts independently. In other words, you will know the language well enough to read virtually any text on your own. In addition by asking and answering questions aloud in a commentarial style, we will try to refine a basic speaking competence.

Schedule: This class has one main activity which is reading. In addition, I will ask you to memorize verses on a regular basis. I will also ask each of you to lead at least one ‘interactive grammar review session’.

Evaluation:

Your grade is made up of the following three components 1. Attendance/participation: 50% 2. midterm 20% 3. final exam 30%.

The midterm (**tentative date: October 22nd**) and final exam (**see online schedule**) will both be cumulative.

Tentative Schedule:

Week 1 (8/27;8/29) Reading Sanskrit: Strategies for sight reading (identifying main verb, subject, etc.) *Rāmopākhyāna*

Week 2 (9/3; 9/5) *Rāmopākhyāna*; Discussion of starting points for grammar review, verse memorization

Week 3 (9/10; 9/12) *Rāmopākhyāna*; Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: the present system and the ten classes of verbs, the *laṭ* (present tense) and the *lañ* imperfect

Week 4 (9/16;9/19) *Rāmopākhyāna* Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: the imperative (*loṭ*) and optative (*vidhi liñ*)

Week 5 (9/23; 9/26) *Rāmopākhyāna* Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: Beyond the Present system: The perfect (*liṭ*)

Week 6 (9/30; 10/3 *Rāmopākhyāna* Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: Beyond the Present system: secondary conjugations

Week 7 (10/7; 10/10) *Rāmopākhyāna* Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: Beyond the Present system: secondary conjugations (continued)

Week 8 (10/15;10/17) *Rāmopākhyāna* Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: Beyond the Present system: The Aorist System

Week 9 (10/22;10/24) MIDTERM *Rāmopākhyāna* Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: Beyond the Present system: The Aorist System (continued)

Week 10 (10/29; 10/31) *Rāmopākhyāna* Targeted grammar review: the verbal systems: Beyond the Present system: The Aorist System

Week 11 (11/5; 11/7) *Rāmopākhyāna* Miscellaneous Grammar Review (Student Presentations)

Week 12 (11/12; 11/14) *Rāmopākhyāna* Miscellaneous Grammar Review (Student Presentations)

Week 13 (11/19; 11/21) *Rāmopākhyāna* Miscellaneous Grammar Review (Student Presentations)

Week 14 (11/26; 11/28) *Rāmopākhyāna* Miscellaneous Grammar Review (Student Presentations)

Week 15 (12/3; 12/5) *Rāmopākhyāna* Miscellaneous Grammar Review (Student Presentations)

Week 16 (12/10; 12/12) *Rāmopākhyāna* Miscellaneous Grammar Review (Student Presentations)

ATTENDANCE: You cannot afford to miss class. Barring a medical or other serious emergency (in which case I will try to help accommodate you) you should never plan to miss class.

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“The Sanskrit language is of a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either.”

--Sir William Jones, Third Address to the Asiatick Society of Bengal, 1786

“Sanskrit is a celestial language repeated by great sages.” –Daṇḍin 7th century

saṃskṛtaṃ nāma daivī vāg anvākyātā maharṣibhiḥ /