



## INTRODUCTION TO SANSKRIT Linguistics & Language

Facilitator: Vladimir Yatsenko, PhD

Credits: 16. One Semester. Code: ISKO

**Dr. Vladimir Yatsenko** is a Russian scholar and teacher of Sanskrit and the Indian scriptures, settled in Auroville (an international township for human unity), since several years.

### Program Brief

An introduction to the growth of Sanskrit language and linguistics from the Vedic, to post-Vedic up till modern times, with a view to understand the underlying philosophies of language, the grammatical structure, poetics and etymology of Sanskrit.

### Course 1

#### From the Vedic to the Post-Vedic Epistemologies (6 Credits)

##### 1. Vedic Paradigm of Language (Samhita period) (10 days)

- To understand the difference between structural and proper semantics and the relation of the sound to meaning
- To understand the shift of the linguistic paradigm from the Vedic to the post-Vedic rational approach to language
- To define the difference between the Vedic and Post Vedic approaches to the Word
- To see the relation of the Cognition to Language in Sanskrit Vocabulary

##### 2. Post-Vedic Theories, Vedangas, Pratishakhyas and Nirukta of Yaska (6th c. BC) (10 days)

- To understand the utility of the Vedic Hymns in the light of Sri Aurobindo
- To be able to relate it to the metaphysical and ritualistic structures of the Vedic Sacrifice
- To be able to discuss the double character of the Sign: Nāma and Rūpa, Vāk and



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Artha, Śrotram and Cakṣuḥ

- To see its relevance in the concept and structure to the Vedic Sacrifice and Svādhyāya
- To define the difference between the Vedic and Post Vedic approaches to Language

3. Grammatical treatises: Ashtadhyayi of Panini (5th c. BC) (10 days)

- To understand the relative character of the Word and its meaning in the rationalistic epistemological paradigm and their indicative (or communicative) function
- To be able to distinguish between vācya and vācaka, sphoṭa and dhvani, prakṛta dhvani and vaikṛta dhvani within the structural semantic of the Word
- To understand the fundamental characteristics of Sphoṭa and the four levels of the Word as they are presented by Bhartṛhari and Sri Aurobindo
- To relate them to the modern Theoretical Linguistics and Structuralism
- To define the concept of the Śabda Brahman (Parā Vāk of the Tantra) as it is presented by Bhartṛhari

4. The Philosophy of Language: Mahabhashya of Patanjali (2nd c. AD) and the Theory of Sphota in Vakyapadiya of Bhartrihari (2nd c. AD) (10 days)

- To understand the semantic relations and limitations of the varṇa-mālā: the phonetic articulations of the word, known as varṇa akhaṇḍa sphoṭa-vāda, and its relation with etymological system of Sanskrit language
- To understand the semantic relations and limitations of the morphological formations of the word: pada akhaṇḍa sphoṭa-vāda, and their relations with the hierarchy of etymological significances of Sanskrit language
- To understand the syntactic structures in terms of semantics on the level of the sentence: vākya, akhaṇḍa sphoṭa-vāda, and their relations to the wider Text as śabda brahman, or in a view of Tantric mahāpaśyantī's definition

5. Theory of Sphota in Tantrism (Shaiva tradition in Kashmir) by Abhinavagupta (10 days)

- To understand and to be able to explain the concept of the Parā Vāk as the transcendent and at the same time all pervading power of the Supreme
- To understand and to be able to explain the concept of the Paśyantī Vāk as the icchā śakti, revealing the intention of the Supreme in the meaning
- To understand and to be able to explain the concept of the Madhyamā Vāk as the parā-aparā and jñāna śakti, revealing the cognitive power of the Supreme in language



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- To understand and to be able to explain the concept of the Vaikharī Vāk as the uttered speech, revealing the manifesting power of the Supreme in speech

## 6. Assimilation and Assessment (10 days)

## Course 2

### Analysis of Sanskrit Language (6 Credits)

#### 1. New methodologies of linguistic analysis: The Origins of Aryan Speech by Sri Aurobindo. Towards a new science of language (10 days)

- To understand the symbolic and universal character of varṇas as the articulations of meaning
- To be able to describe the Sanskrit Phonetic system in a meaningful way
- To understand and to be able to explain all the types of the phonetic changes in the words and roots of Sanskrit, known as guṇa and vṛddhi
- To explain the significance of this derivational system

#### 2. Theory of Transparent Etymology of Sanskrit Language (10 days)

- To understand the basic significances of varṇas in relation to the efforts to articulate a particular meaning
- To understand the system of varṇas in relation to the articulatory apparatus of man and the production of clearly demarcated and consciously articulated sound-meanings
- To be able to narrate the Myth of Creation depicted in Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali as the creation of the clearly articulated system of varṇas

#### 3. Structure and Categories of Sanskrit Grammar (10 days)

- To understand in great detail the major categories of Sanskrit Grammar reflected in the production of avyayas and demonstrative pronouns
- To understand the meaning of all these faculties and their universal character for every language
- To be able to structure on this basis any sentence as meaningful

#### 4. Nouns and Verbs of Sanskrit Morphology (10 days)

- To understand and to be able to explain the semantic difference between the Kāraṅkas and Vibhaktis
- To understand and to be able to explain the system of Sārvadhātuka system of the verbs
- To be able to review the whole system of Ārdhadhātuka verbs



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#### 5. Chandas: Basics of Sanskrit Poetics (10 days)

- To understand and be able to explain the difference between the iambic and trochaic feet
- To understand and be able to explain the constitution of the five syllabic and eight syllabic stanza of Virāj and Gāyatrī meters
- To understand and be able to explain the constitution of the eleven syllabic pāda, Triṣṭubh
- To understand and be able to explain the constitution of the twelve syllabic pāda, Jagatī and all other derivational meters

#### 6. Assimilation and Assessment (10 days)

### Course 3

#### Research Practicum/Seminar/Project Work (4 Credits)

- Project Outline (10 days)
- First Draft of Research Paper (30 days)
- Final Submission of Research Paper (15 days)