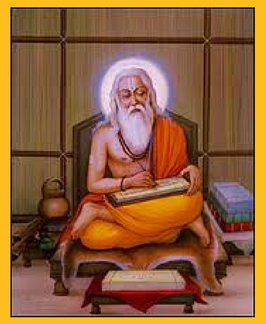
Sanskrit

The Divine Language of Sanatan Dharm

Sanskrit is a pillar of Sanatan Dharm, and its early contribution to the culture of Bharat--including its philosophy, science, literature, history, anthropology, linguistics--is immense. Sanskrit was considered in ancient Bharat as dev bhasha, devavâni, the divine language. The very word means refined, purified and perfect. It is made up of the primordial sounds, and is developed systematically to include the natural progressions of sounds. Our ancient rishis attached a great deal of importance to sound, and hence their writing, poetry or prose, had a rhythmic and musical quality.

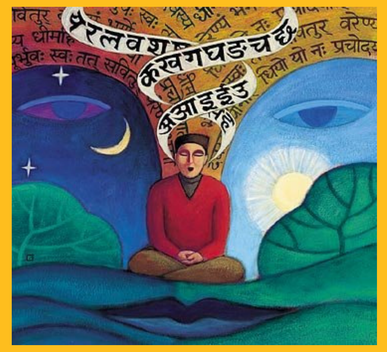
In world history and culture, Sanskrit has also been very influential, making it's scriptural way across Southeast Asia, Tibet, China, Korea and Japan. Many Southeast Asian languages are heavily flavored with Sanskrit, while many languages in Bharat are directly derived from it.

Sanskrit has always been the language of all cultured people in Bharat, as well as in countries under Indian influence. In ancient Bharat, all scientific, philosophical, historical and poetical works were written in Sanskrit.

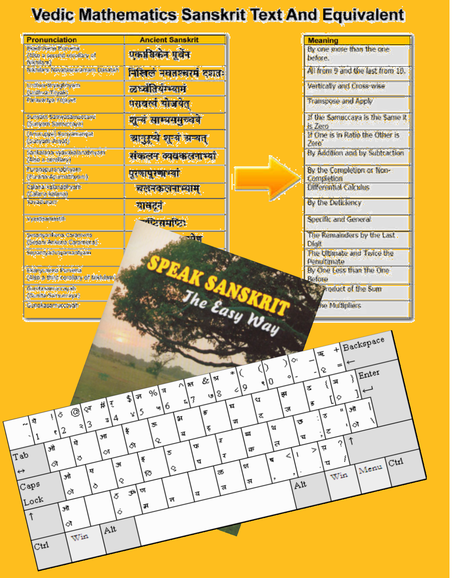


Eternal

All prayers and religious ceremonies in Sanatan Dharm are conducted in Sanskrit. Thousands of people in Bharat and throughout the world read, write and converse in Sanskrit. It is one of the most ancient languages of humanity, and, above all, it provides access to a wealth of wisdom and knowledge.



Sanskrit is the oldest and the most systematic language in the world. The vastness and the versatility, the richness and the power of expression can be appreciated even by the simple fact that it has over 60 words to describe various forms of earth or water. Sanskrit is constructed like geometry and follows a rigorous logic. It is theoretically possible to explain the meaning of its words according to the combined sense of the relative letters, syllables and roots; consequently, it does not age. Maharishi Panini wrote a complete, quasi-mathematical grammar for Sanskrit over two thousand years ago. To this date, this remains an precious tool to learn Sanskrit.



Why learn it?

The reason for studying Sanskrit today are the same as they ever were: that the vast array of Sanskrit texts preserves for us a crucial part of the cultural heritage of humankind, including much beautiful literature and many interesting and fascinating ideas. Above all, Sanskrit is the key that unlocks the treasures of Sanatan Dharm, the wisdom of ancient rishis captured in our Veds and Upanishads, and the culture accumulated over thousands of years in ancient Bharat.

Sanskrit literature is immense—poetry, history, philosophy, music, astronomy, geography, medicine and other disciplines; it is a huge reservoir waiting to be known by us. Sanskrit is the vehicle used by our ancient rishis to convey the wisdom of the Veds and the other shrutis that constitute the basis of Sanatan Dharm. It is the language of our itihas, such as the Ramayan and the Mahabharat; our poorans, such as the Bhagwat pooran and the Shiv pooran. It is the language of our dharm shastrs, darshans, agamas, kavis and nataks, and so many other types of Bharat's literature.

Jawaharlal Nehru said: «If I was asked what the greatest treasure which Bharat possesses is and what is its greatest heritage, I would answer unhesitatingly that it is the Sanskrit language and literature and all that it contains. This is a magnificent inheritance, and so long as this endures and influences the life of our people, so long will the basic genius of Bharat continue».