



SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY

Creating the Next Future

स्पन्दन

feeling the pulsation of a divine language

SRI AUROBINDO FOUNDATION FOR INDIAN CULTURE (SAFIC)

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY, PUDUCHERRY, INDIA

Spandana: Feeling the Pulsation of a Divine Language

Report of the Workshop from 15th to 21st of January, 2012

Defined as the language of growing consciousness, Sanskrit is an integral experience of divinity.

The core function of a language lies in the perfect communication of something; and, Sanskrit is a perfect language. The learning of Sanskrit is thus not only an academic pursuit but also the beginning of a spiritual journey.

The mother of all languages, Sanskrit has evolved more than a language can. The superb structural beauty, the subtle harmony of its science and the spirit of its metre and rhythm makes it the purest language.

Spandana, a weeklong intensive Sanskrit learning course was organized by Sri Aurobindo Foundation for Indian Culture [SAFIC] from 15th to 21st of January 2012 for the third time. The major thrust of the program was to introduce Sanskrit, in a perfect way to the participants and to awaken a natural curiosity in their minds towards the language. Another objective of the course was to bring about a greater awareness about the Sanskrit language and its various aspects.

All the sessions were planned carefully keeping in mind the relative interest of the participants and importance of the language. The course was facilitated by Dr. Sampadananda Mishra, the Director of SAFIC. Every day from morning 6.00 am to evening 5.30 pm the participants were exposed to the various aspects of the Sanskrit language including but not limited to grammar, literature, phonetics, vocabulary,

metre, rhythm, beauty and appeal. The chanting session- from morning 6.00 to 7.00 - was to add to the special experience of the language. The session also taught the participants about the easy and effective ways of chanting mantras and *shlokas* from the Vedas and other devotional Sanskrit literature.

Everyday three hours were devoted to conversational Sanskrit to provide to the participants a dynamic experience of the spoken Sanskrit from the standpoint of the stimulus-response relationship. The session also focused on vibration quality and clarity of each Sanskrit sound. Apart from it, there were two different sessions on Sanskrit alphabet and their scientifically systematic sound arrangement. The sessions also talked about the eternal connection between the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet and the *pranayama*.

In the sessions on the rhythm of Sanskrit metres, the participants were introduced to the marvelous beauty of the rhythmic movements of the Sanskrit poetry and the various nuances of Sanskrit metres. In another three sessions on the basics of Sanskrit grammar, attempt was to understand the systematic yet the complex nature of the language.

There were also two activity sessions on stories in which the participants were active in making stories in Sanskrit as simply as possible. It is in these sessions that they were made to sing few nursery rhymes in Sanskrit.

There was one insightful session on the Bhagavad Gita (varied contents and concepts) by Dr. Mishra. In another informative session Mr. Shiva Kumar talked about Sri Aurobindo Society and its range of activities.

The course ended with a feedback session with each participant sharing his/her experiences of the workshop. On the whole, the course, to a great extent, has been successful in achieving its objectives and introducing participants to the greatness of Sanskrit language.

Feedback from the Participants of January 2012 Workshop

The workshop of this type to me is not mostly an occasion to learn the language but is a source of inspiration and the treasure of ancient Indian wisdom. The book given here is really the repository of the beauty and glory of Sanskrit. It is inspiring, educating, interesting and innovating.

*Dr. Suresh Chandra Sharma,
Gwalior, M.P.*

I have always felt and thought that Sanskrit was a wonderful, magic language. Now, after this workshop, I know much more (but feel so much to be discovered and experienced) why I had these feeling and thought- Huge Hands!

*Sylvie,
Auroville*

I must say, as hard as it is to find a good teacher, it is harder to leave once you have found one. For years I had been searching for a true and devoted Sanskrit guru and now I am glad that I have found one in Sampad. One could feel his passion for this beautiful, ancient language. Ancient it may be but archaic it is certainly not. Given time, I am sure I could be proficient in Sanskrit under the guidance of Sampad. And someday I might be able to give back the jewels of Sanskrit wisdom, which to me is synonymous with Sanatana Dharma. During the week in Pondy, I had collected some gems which gladden my heart to no end. And for me this blessed town by the sea, will always be about that.

Roslee, Malaysia

The wonder, indeed, that is Sanskrit, we could feel all along this workshop. Hard to say how much Sampad did to make it appear so interesting.

I had caught a bad cold, so I missed a few sessions, but I could not really stop coming. Now I feel I would not stop practicing and trying more and more, to get this perfect language. Mostly I want to be able read and understand the sastra this is my first aim in learning Sanskrit. Uttering mantra in a proper way is also very important to me.

For all this, the workshop was infinitely great.

Robeato Caputo, Auroville

For a long time I have wanted to learn another language other than English, but I have only been got to a certain point and always felt inhibited. This workshop has been an experience of immense expansion. Sampad Ji has given me the tools and the confidence to learn any language.

I feel strongly that going ever deeper and learning the essence of Sanskrit will be a lifelong joy. Thank you so much.

Megan Crouse, UK

Marvelous and got an impression that I can learn this "so called thoughtful language" in effortless way. Everything was delivered in perfect way following a step by step approach.

S. Kesavan, Chennai

This has been an experience of expansion, I have loved the morning chanting and the first session every day, and also the wonders of alphabet, grammar. Sadly my mind is a slow learner and so the let us speak sessions I could not keep up with the learning but I decided it would flow in by osmosis, so I have kept my

ears open to what I can hear the sound, the Cadences, the flow. This was good...So looking back at what I wrote before the workshop, in what I hope to gain this has been well satisfied and more I have met lovely people, experienced the Ashram , and spend much time beside my beloved ocean. I am content.

Wanasai, Australia

It was a great experience for a novice, in Sanskrit, like me. But my appetite has not yet been satisfied. I know this is not the purpose of the program. I know further that it is very difficult for one person to impart knowledge right from morning to evening, still I wished for more power packed sessions.

Mukulesh Biswas, Pondicherry

Excellent workshop. No waste of time. I have no words to write about our teacher. He a real example and only what I could write is thank you from innermost bottom of my heart. The book "The Wonder that is Sanskrit" is very good. We come to know many things about Sanskrit. We all have respect for Sanskrit but our knowledge about it is very poor. From this book we learn about Sanskrit and its association with other fields.

Madhavi Borkar, Pondicherry

All sessions on lets speak Sanskrit were outstanding. They couldn't have been done better. All the participants were made to understand and creatively contribute. When one participant makes a sentence or is corrected, the benefit was to everyone else. Though the participants were making some basic mistakes, no one was belittled. At the end everyone was longing for making more sentences.

Phani Kumar, Hyderabad

Dr. Mishra's teaching style is unique and unforgettable. He is scholar and a humble and a simple person. He should take more classes for the glory of our culture and Sanskrit.

Dr.Madanmohan, Pondicebrry

I was very impressed.

Pal Margit (Palma)

Morning mantra chanting was beautiful. It started the day balancing and harmonizing the being. Let us speak Sanskrit led to in depth understanding of the knowledge.

Sohag Patel, Pondicebrry

I have no words to answer this question. I feel now that I know nothing but just a little. I feel very sorry that Sampadji's classes have ended now and do not know when such opportunity will come again. I have a deep desire to continue my studies here for the rest of my life which will be a heavenly experience for me.

Tears come to my eyes when I think that I have to leave because the classes are over. I don't know the cause of such emotions.

स्पन्दन

Manwendra Pandey, Lucknow

This workshop is really very inspiring to increase our knowledge. Such camp should be organized in different part of the country, so then others will also be benefited.

Sudhir Tewari, Lucknow

The Spandan feeling the pulsation of a divine language i.e. Sanskrit has been felt to the heart's content.

The first session itself was the doorway to the participants to understand the greatness of Sanskrit... The total workshop has been a compact capsule for providing treatment for various diseases of the human civilization and to meet their further aspiration... I shall grade it as EXCELLENT and would look upon for further collaboration and deliberation.

B.K. Senapati, Bhubaneswar

