

IIT Madras Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems

COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO CLASSICAL LITERATURE IN SANSKRIT

Focus Area/Subject Area: Sanskrit Literature, History of Sanskrit literature, Vedic and Classical Literature

Course Frequency: 4 Classes per Week (Class duration: 50 minutes)

Eligibility: Any UG Degree

Prerequisite: Basic knowledge of Sanskrit

Details of the Instructor:

Dr. Deepak Paramashivan, Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Madras

Course Objectives:

Sanskrit literature can be classified under two timelines. The Vedic literature and the classical literature. The classical literature includes the early classical itihasa (historical) texts namely Ramayana and Mahabharata, Puranas, and late classical texts, Kavyas by great poets such as Kalidasa, Bharavi, Bana, Bhaasa, Shri Harsha. This course is an introduction to the late classical literature through the pancha Mahakavyas namely Kumara Sambhava, Raghuvamsha by Kalidasa, Shri Harsha's Naishadha Charita, Masha's Shishupala Vadha and Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya. The course will introduce the literary devices, themes, rasa theory, alankara and Chandas in these texts to give a comprehensive understanding of Sanskrit literature and its influence on the Indian thought.

Learning Outcome:

Through this course, students will learn:

1. History of Sanskrit literature
2. Lives of great Sanskrit poets like Kalidasa, Bharavi, Bhasa, Bhavabhuti et al.
3. Read excerpts from pancha Mahakavyas
4. Understand the socio-cultural milieu under which this literature was composed.

SYLLABUS

- History of Sanskrit Literature, Classification, Introduction to Vedic literature Brahmana, Aranyaka, Upanishads.
- Introduction to Itihasa, Ramayana and Mahabharata.
- What is a Kavya? Kavya, Dasha Rupaka, What are the lakshanas of Mahakavyas? Pancha

References:

1. A Concise History of Classical Sanskrit Literature Gaurinath Shastri Motilal Banarasi Das <https://www.motilalbanarsidass.com/products/a-concise-history-of-classical-sanskrit-literature>
2. Raghuvamsha, Kumara Sambhava with commentary by M R Kale
3. Naishadha Charita by Krishna Kanta Handiqui https://ignca.gov.in/Asi_data/5338.pdf
4. Shishupala Vadham by S N Dixit
<https://ia801302.us.archive.org/21/items/in.ernet.dli.2015.312929/2015.312929.Sisupalavadham-.pdf>
5. Kiratarjuniyam by Kshitish Chandra Chattopadhyay
<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.313668/page/76/mode/2up>