

Suggestions for Use

The present fully annotated edition of the Rāmopākhyāna may serve students at various levels. It may be profitably used either in class to train students in rigorous standards of analysis or out of class as an independent-study reader. The analysis of each verse provided here as described in the preceding chapter embodies every detail of the highest degree of analysis expected in the most rigorous university Sanskrit course. It therefore serves both as a model of proper analysis in a course and as a resource for that degree of analysis in independent study. It spares the student unnecessary effort and saves valuable time by providing the vocabulary and collecting all other information necessary for a complete comprehension of each verse.

The book was originally conceived as an independent-study resource for students who have completed a basic survey of Sanskrit grammar such as taught in a university-level Sanskrit course. The conception evolved out of my own experience studying Sanskrit independently. In my sophomore year of college, before learning Sanskrit, I read the Vedanta Society's editions of the Upaniṣads which included the Devanāgarī text with word by word Roman transliteration and contextual English translation. After my first-year course, I used Sargeant's edition of the *Bhagavadgītā*, which includes the identification and parsing of compounds, and inflectional identification and contextual translation of each word, besides the text, transliteration, and translation of each verse quarter. I reviewed each page to confirm my work and clarify my understanding after translating each verse on my own with Monier-Williams's dictionary.

The present edition of the Rāmopākhyāna puts far greater resources at the disposal of the student. Users of the book should read the previous chapter to familiarize themselves with what these are in order to derive maximum from the book. Although initially designed for serious independent study, the presentation allows the investigating student at any level to access information about each verse as needed. One may attempt to achieve an analysis of the text at various levels oneself before consulting the information relevant to that level of analysis to confirm or correct one's suppositions. Therefore the book may also serve students from the very beginning of study for practice in reading the script, recognizing sandhi, identifying grammatical forms, enriching vocabulary, etc. Below I outline a few of the ways in which students at various levels may use the text.

A. Suggestions for students

1. Serious independent study

A student who has completed a basic survey of Sanskrit grammar such as taught in a university-level Sanskrit course should do following for each verse:

1. Listen to the digital audio recording of the verse three times without looking at the text. Then attempt to recite the verse aloud in meter along with the recording once. Listen again once following along in the Devanāgarī text. Attempt to recite the verse aloud in meter along with the recording once more. End by reciting the verse along with the recording three times without looking at the text. Proceed to the steps below regardless of degree of perfection attained.
2. Consult the Roman transliteration only as needed, for example to decipher or confirm obscure conjunct consonants.
3. Study the pop-up box for each word you do not know or about which you are uncertain.
 - a. Read each lexical entry once through completely with subordinate derivations. Read the compound-glosses. Since Sanskrit commentators in all Indian disciplines frequently utilize

- such glosses it is worthwhile becoming familiar with them. Read the entry in the Glossary of Proper Names when you encounter an unfamiliar proper noun.
- b. Return to the boxes of the words you do not remember, pausing just long enough to note the lexical category and translation.
 - c. Return to the boxes of the words you do not remember a third time if the meaning does not come to mind immediately. Do not waste time trying to remember if the meaning does not come immediately.
 - d. Repeat c until the meaning of most of the words comes immediately. Frequent repetition is more fruitful than struggle.
4. Study the verse looking only at the Devanāgarī and attempt to work out the meaning.
 - a. Look for clause divisions: relative pronouns and adverbs, clause connective particles such as *hi*, *tu*, *ca*, *vā*, *ha*, *vai*, and demonstrative pronouns or adverbs used clause-initially.
 - b. Look for, identify, and translate conjugated verbs or participles used as main verbs, in each clause.
 - c. Look for the agent of the action denoted by the verb in numerical agreement with it in an active construction or in the instrumental in a passive construction. Translate the basic sentence consisting of verb and agent.
 - d. Look for the direct object of a transitive verb or verb of locomotion in the accusative in an active construction, or in the nominative in numerical agreement with the verb in a passive construction. Translate the basic sentence consisting of verb, agent and direct object.
 - e. Collect all forms in numerical and gender agreement with the agent and those in agreement with the accusative and add them to your translation.
 - f. Fill in the rest keeping in mind that verse often puts items syntactically related in the same verse quarter.
 5. Consult the analyzed sandhi and inflectional identification only when you have made a fair attempt on your own.
 6. After a fair attempt at construing the verse but well before becoming frustrated, work through the Sanskrit prose sentences in order, consulting the pop-up boxes on the verse for vocabulary as needed.
 - a. Apply 4a-e.
 - b. In normal Sanskrit prose word-order the main verb generally closes a clause, and qualifiers precede what they qualify: An adjective immediately precedes the noun it modifies, a genitive immediately precedes the noun it limits, an adverb immediately precedes the verb, as do other verbal complements.
 7. Read the notes and refer back to the prose sentences and to the verse in Devanāgarī to understand their relevance.
 8. Reread the verse, attempting a complete translation.
 9. Read the English translation and correct your understanding as necessary with reference to the notes, prose sentences, sandhi analysis, Roman transliteration, and word by word analysis including inflectional identification, stem, lexical categorization, and translation.
 10. Recite the verse aloud in meter again, reading the Devanāgarī, not displaying any other information. Play the verse again; proceed as in 1 to the extent needed.
 11. At the close of a day's study session, recite all the verses translated in that session as described in 10.
 12. At the start of each day's study session do the same and review your comprehension of the verse by consulting the resources given on the page as necessary. Favor consulting the prose sentences first in this review and avoid consulting the English translation of the verse.
 13. Recite some of the text daily as described in 10, five, ten or twenty verses at a time, or a chapter at a time. Ideally one should recite when fresh and alert at a quiet time in a quiet place. In the Vedic tradition of India, one does one's daily recitation (*svādhyāya*) early in the morning after bathing and cleansing the mouth, quieting the breath (*prāṇāyāma*), and meditating, before eating and before the days activity.

2. Devanāgarī lesson

1. Listen to the digital recording of the verse and read the Devanāgarī text aloud as in number 1 under §IIIA1 Serious independent study.
2. Compare it with the Roman transliteration, syllable by syllable.
3. Read the English translation.
4. Read the Devanāgarī text aloud again, reciting in meter if possible, after hiding the Roman transliteration and English translation.
5. At the close of a day's study session, reread all the verses read in that session as described in 4.

6. At the start of each day's study session do the same consulting the Roman transliteration as necessary.
7. Choose five verses and recite them daily as described in 4 observing the suggestions under number 13 in §IIIA1 Serious independent study.

3. Sandhi lesson

1. Display the analyzed sandhi and hide the Devanāgarī text and Roman transliteration.
2. At each word boundary in the analyzed sandhi perform the necessary sound changes consulting a sandhi chart if necessary.
3. Compare the result with the Roman transliteration.

4. Casual independent study

Prior to completing a basic survey of Sanskrit grammar, a student who can read Devanāgarī script and analyze sandhi should follow the steps outlined for serious independent study with the following qualifications:

1. Do not expect to translate the whole verse at step 4 or the prose sentences at step 6 since they may use grammatical forms and syntactic constructions with which you are not familiar. Pick out what you know and then move on to step 5 or 7.
2. Pick out what seems useful from the notes but allow yourself to skip what seems obscure. The syntactic notes have been formulated to point out constructions with which the reader has some previous familiarity; they do not systematically introduce or thoroughly explain the syntactic constructions.
3. Permit yourself to rely more heavily on the English translation; after reading it try to figure out how the verse expresses what the translation says.
4. In the review at step 12, rely less on the prose sentences and as much as needed on the English translation.

5. Advanced independent study

Use the resources as described in the suggestions in §IIIA1 Serious independent study, with the following qualifications:

1. Favor consulting the prose sentences.
2. Use the transliteration, sandhi analysis, and each word's pop-up box only as necessary. Use the mouse-over feature to display the word-boundaries in the Devanāgarī text if needed rather than displaying the analyzed sandhi in transliteration. Use the pop-up boxes by clicking on the Devanāgarī word rather than on the sandhi analysis.
3. Consult the English translation only to confirm your translation.
4. Read Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary in the notes.

6. Advanced study and research

a. Nīlakaṇṭha

The notes do not literally translate Nīlakaṇṭha's comments, nor do I recommend that one publish literal translations of close commentarial Sanskrit prose. The notes do however explain the substance of his comments. One may train oneself to work independently with commentary by translating Nīlakaṇṭha's comments with the help of the explanations provided of them.

b. Pāṇini

The derivations in the text-analysis often refer to Pāṇinian rules. Students of Pāṇinian grammar may look up the sūtra references in the *Kāśīkā*. The bibliography recommends additional tools for the study of Pāṇinian grammar. More ambitious students may investigate the references made to Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*.

c. Semantic and Lexical research

The Index used in conjunction with the Kramapāṭha Reader may serve as a tool to research and compare the usage of specific words.

d. Syntactic research

Extensive indices of the Rāmopākhyāna are available using the Index program of the Sanskrit Library. Individuals may utilize these tools for scholarly purposes under the provision that presentations and publications to which their use contributes make proper acknowledgement.

B. Suggestions for instructors

I strongly recommend recommending the book to students at the completion of their first-year Sanskrit course to utilize during the intersession. The book was specifically designed to allow students to continue their study independently at this stage. With this resource their skills will mount between terms rather than subside.

Although the present edition of the Rāmopākhyāna was originally conceived as an independent-study reader, I have used the materials in the course of their preparation in my second-year Sanskrit class to the delight and benefit of the students. It allows them to expand their vocabulary, solidify their skills, read a significant amount of text, and enjoy a centerpiece of ancient Indian literature while sparing them the frustration of using a large dictionary before they have a clue of what to look up. The time saved searching aimlessly in the dictionary may better be utilized in memorizing vocabulary or in researching particularly important terms. Utilizing the text has an additional benefit: Because the text thoroughly covers all the technical points of grammar and syntax, it frees class time to bring the language and the story to life through oral Sanskrit practice and discussion.

As a textbook, I recommend that Sanskrit instructors use the edition during the first half of a third-semester Sanskrit course as follows:

1. Have the students utilize the text as suggested in §IIIA1 Serious independent study, including the review and recitation in steps 12 and 13. I recommend frequent review of text read as the best method to strengthen vocabulary as well as syntax, though one may also wish to advise students to memorize the verbal roots encountered or those in Whitney's *Roots*. The Index of the Sanskrit Library includes a feature to generate vocabulary lists of various specifications and dimensions.
2. Advise students to be prepared to translate the prose sentences and verse without the aid of any of the resources provided. Include the prose sentences and question students about compounds, in order to prevent less ambitious students from relying too heavily upon the English translation of the verse, and upon the English translation of long compounds, without comprehending their analyses.
3. Early in the semester have them translate the prose sentences under each verse and then the verse itself in class without relying on any aids.
4. After a few weeks shift from translating the prose sentences to having them write their own Sanskrit prose sentences for the verses they've prepared. Make new one's up in class. Ask them questions in Sanskrit to answer in class or for homework. When and to what degree to make such a shift depends upon the speed and ability of the students. Their progress obviously depends upon their self-restraint in observing the steps as outlined in §IIIA1.
5. As an examination, select segments, a few verses in length, from what they have read. Include a sight passage with its prose sentences and any vocabulary they have not encountered at least twice before. Ask them to write one sentence summarizing each passage on the exam. Ask them to translate and answer a couple of questions. Ask them to identify some forms and analyze some compounds. As an oral component, ask them to recite a passage they've memorized and translate it.
6. After half a semester or so I recommend moving to another text in order to get students to utilize a dictionary and to do their own analysis. If not to Lanman's reader, one may begin to train students in the use of a full dictionary by asking them to look up selected terms while they are working with the Rāmopākhyāna in order to make the shift smooth.

As a textbook the present edition of the Rāmopākhyāna serves to enable students to internalize some vocabulary and enjoy reading a good deal of text without spending too much time looking up words. After a couple of months, one may recommend that students continue to utilize it on their own after the semester's end, during the winter break, and whenever they wish to continue to study Sanskrit independently.