

The marvellous people who study Sanskrit and take examinations

We are now approaching the examination period for 2016, which is a very interesting time indeed for the examination resource website administrator. It is always inspiring to find that people from all over the world have been studying Sanskrit and are committing, for all sorts of reasons, to sit the examinations at IGCSE, AS and A level. Something that is often overlooked in our busy world is that every single person is important in influencing events; in this case, when the examination numbers are relatively small, the positive effect of every entry becomes very obvious indeed. We have feedback about students of all ages from the UK, Australia, South Africa, India and Nepal who have entered for the 2016 examinations, while other students have been enquiring about local Cambridge Examination Centres elsewhere, including the United Arab Emirates. Interest seems to be developing and we are hopeful that the numbers of candidates overall will be increased this year.

ISER website administrator

Moving on

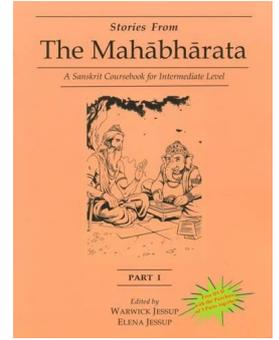
Kamalesh Sharma has completed his term as Commonwealth Secretary-General, prior to which he was the Indian High Commissioner in London. Throughout his many years in the UK he has been of very great help in supporting *Sanskrit @ St James*, from enabling funding to speaking to the right people to get things done. We are most grateful for his continuous assistance, and he has our best wishes for the future.

The new Mahabharata books are here!

Three new St James text books, *Stories from the Mahabharata Parts 1, 2 & 3* carefully prepared by Warwick & Elena Jessup, Sanskrit teachers at St James Schools, and produced by Motilal Banarsidass, the eminent Indian publishing house, are now available for purchase through Amazon. Designed for the first stage of Senior School studies, these books prepare the way for the IGCSE examination.

The publishers are actively promoting the study of Sanskrit at primary and secondary school level in India and elsewhere using all the ten St James text books which are now available.

RP Jain, Motilal's director, has been instrumental in arranging a number of meetings between Paul Palmaroza, Director of *Sanskrit @ St James* and schools in India, and has also fostered links with government officials.



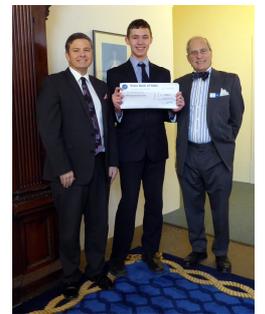
Recent developments for the IGCSE Sanskrit Examination

The plan now established is that the materials for the Cambridge International Examination board's new IGCSE Sanskrit examination will be ready for distribution to schools by September this year, with the first formal examinations to be offered in 2019. The CIE team are meeting in April and will submit a proposal to *Sanskrit @ St James* for a new Memorandum of Understanding covering the period 2017-2019. The current MoU has meant that the St James Schools has had to underwrite the cost of IGCSE, AS and A Level Sanskrit examinations.

From 2017, CIE will reduce the number of IGCSE examinations which have to be underwritten and St James Schools will cease to underwrite AS Level Sanskrit. From 2019, IGCSE Sanskrit, being a standard CIE examination parallel with Latin, will need no underwriting. St James Schools are currently discussing with CIE about the underwriting needed for A Level Sanskrit examinations going forward.

Two £1,000 scholarships in Sanskrit

Sanskrit @ St James has enabled many Scholarships in Sanskrit which have been generously funded by the Indian High Commissioner over many years. Here are the 2016 awards, one being given to Samuel Barnard of the St James School for Senior Boys and four erudite and enthusiastic Sanskrit scholars from the Senior Girls School who shared equally their £1,000 scholarship award.



Above right: David Brazier Headmaster having given the cheque to Samuel Barnard, with Martin Bloomfield

Left: Enthusiastic receivers of cheques! Anna Wills, Anoop Sahota, Millie Morrissey and Aditi Patel.

Sanskrit @ St James promotes and supports the teaching of Sanskrit globally. It is voluntarily managed by Paul Palmaroza, Helen Harper & Martin Bloomfield with essential support from current and ex-teachers from the **St James Schools** in London. This Newsletter is published from time to time to inform our marvellous friends and supporters of our current work.

Web: www.sanskritatstjames.org.uk **email:** sanskrit@stjameschools.co.uk **Sanskrit exam support site:** www.sanskritexams.org.uk
Address: *Sanskrit @ St James* Earsby Street London W14 8SH UK **Telephone** +44 (0) 20 7348 1743 **Registered charity** No 270156

120 visits each day on the ISER website !

Connections with people from all over the world are made every day through this portal. Most requests relate to the teaching videos, but many people working on their own also ask for access to the tutors' materials.

Quite often, as a result of these requests, further help is given with students' study.

Our website enables information and practical help to be available in a way not otherwise possible to those outside the St James circle. Since the **International Sanskrit Examination Resources** web site was set up in 2008 we have had more than 207,000 visits in total and currently there is an amazing average of 120 visits per day.

The Sanskrit Review

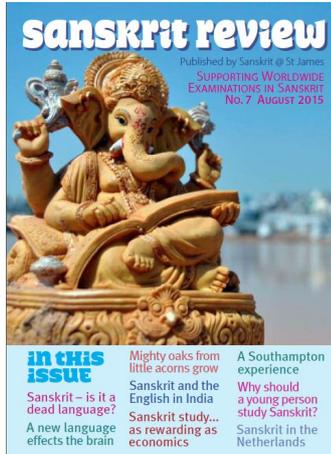
Supporting students worldwide

We are very grateful for the continuing support from the **Newman Education Trust** in enabling this Sanskrit Review and its distribution worldwide.

Containing support for the Cambridge Sanskrit examinations, it is full of encouragement, news and experiences from around the globe. Three essays written by pupils of St James Senior Girls' School appeared in the recent edition, entitled 'What justification can be given for studying Sanskrit literature?'

Published by **Sanskrit @ St James**, - contributions invited!

Cover picture of 2015 Review



If you would like to be sent a copy, email martin@sanskritatstjames.org.uk

A splendid new learning course in Sanskrit and Vedanta

On Saturday morning, 16th April, tutored by David Stollar, a new beginners' course in Sanskrit starts at the St James Senior Girls' School in Hammersmith. Additional to the linguistic study will be the Vedantic teaching it embodies, and particularly the great Sanskrit epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The course will aim at a public examination, the IGCSE offered by the Cambridge International Examination board.

There will be no charge for this course which has attracted over twenty candidates; many are from the Anglo-Indian community, no doubt wishing to learn more of their cultural roots.

The course begins with learning to write and read the beautiful Devanagari script. The study of the magnificently orderly Sanskrit grammar is then introduced through the stories in the St James series of textbooks, which are now backed up by videos allowing the subject matter to be pursued in the students' own time. The high point of the course comes in the final few terms when the examination set text is the Bhagavad Gita in Sanskrit.

Aiming for Sanskrit within a School's Classics Department

A Seminar organised by **Sanskrit @ St James** for Classics Teachers was held at Kings College, London recently, presented by Dr Antonia Ruppel, formally Senior lecturer at Cornell University (Classics and Sanskrit), now teaching Classics and Sanskrit at St James Senior Boys School.

An enthusiastic audience of around twenty Classics teachers from as far afield as Durham and Shrewsbury were introduced to the nature of Sanskrit and what makes it special. Dr Ruppel followed this with an overview of the parallels between Latin and Greek forms and Sanskrit – a useful aid to anyone with a Classics background wanting to learn Sanskrit.



Antonia and participants

An engaging talk was given by Jacqui Meredith (King Edward VI School, Southampton) who after attending a training day last year, was so inspired that she founded a Sanskrit club at her school. It attracted 20 pupils, not only Classics students, and after one year has retained a keen, close-knit group of ten. Their interest is such that when they heard that a GCSE was available, they decided to work towards it. A great ice breaker at interviews!

The day ended with a recorded recital in Sanskrit from a class of pupils at St James School. **Sanskrit @ St James** aims to continue offering such Teacher Training sessions yearly, for as long as there is an enthusiastic attendance.

Another useful visit to India

Paul Palmarozza had an initial meeting with the new Director of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), which has been our prime funder for the past four years. The Director was pleased with our progress and the indications are that they will continue funding **Sanskrit @ St James**. We have now received the payment of £8,000 for 2016 and they are committed to pay us another £8,000 in 2017.

Paul also met with **Mr H P Kanoria**, the Chairman of the *SREI Foundation* who was our initial patron and who continues to support our activities, and also **Dr Khuntiaji**, Secretary/Director of the *Department of School Education & Literacy*, to discuss Sanskrit in schools in India. There is now a very active government-sponsored initiative to promote the teaching of Sanskrit in Indian schools. We were asked to submit suggestions for this promotion based on our extensive experience, and a note has been prepared and submitted to the Committee.

Sanskrit @ St James depends on charitable donations.

Can you support us in this work of promoting the teaching of Sanskrit and its formal examinations worldwide?

We have a **PayPal** account on www.sanskritatstjames.org.uk, or write or email us at the address overleaf.