

Note on Sanskrit and Marathi Words

One of the challenges that a reader encounters with a book dealing with a tradition embedded in a highly refined language such as this one – the name of the “Sanskrit” language itself means “refined” – is the large number of technical terms. I strongly believe that a basic understanding of these words is crucial for the reader to understand the tradition. Honouring the centrality that the *brāhmaṇas* give to sound and proper pronunciation, I have given all Sanskrit terms with diacritics. Since my goal is not to make the reading tedious for those unfamiliar with the Sanskritic jargon (which would make my work inaccessible to the non-specialist) but rather to ease the experience of the reader, in addition to introducing the terms in the text itself I have added a glossary of the most common Sanskrit and Marathi terms appearing in this book.

Non-English words are marked in italics, except for names, primary sources, and places. I have used the International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration (IAST) system for Sanskrit words, but have employed the transliteration of names, places, and other Marathi terms derived from Sanskrit using the Marathi pronunciation, rather than adhering to the Sanskrit convention. For example: Rāmdās instead of Rāmdāsa. In the absence of a standard convention for the transliteration of Marathi into English, I have retained diacritical marks on most Marathi and Hindi words in italics throughout the book. Although Indic languages and dialects make no distinction between uppercase and lowercase letters, I use capitals to indicate proper names (Śīva, Kṛṣṇa) and titles (Ṛgvedasaṃhitā, Taittiriyabrāhmaṇa). Terms that have been anglicized in form or have come into English usage (*paṇḍit*, *avatāra*) are given in their standard transliterated forms, with diacritics and italics; only the adjectives that are not themselves Sanskrit terms appear without italics (such as Purāṇic or Brāhmaṇical), and language names have been transliterated without diacritics (Marāṭhī = Marathi). In addition, the plural form of non-English words is used as in English, however the plural ending is not italicized (such as in *avatāras*). The anglicized term ‘Brahmin’ that would appear with a high frequency in the text has been replaced by ‘*brāhmaṇa*’ instead for the sake of consistency in the text. Indic words that occur in English quotations are given without diacritics, unless used by the author. In case of a Sanskrit or Marathi word being difficult to recognize in an English quotation, its standard transliterated version will be given in square brackets – for example: “shroud [*śrauta*].” Modern place names such as Maharashtra or names of cities that are commonly known by their English spelling (for example Alandi instead of Aḷaṃḍī) have been used in their anglicised form. Modern proper names of Indian origin are given in their transliterated forms, except for authors and other public figures who are well known in their anglicised form (for example, Madhav Deshpande instead of Mādhav Deśpāṇḍe).