

Name of Resource person Prof Murgeshi T

Name of subject Manuscriptology and Epigraphy

Name of paper INDIAN SCRIPTS FOR WRITING SANSKRIT WORKS. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN Manuscriptology and Epigraphy

Paper code

Unit number descriptive

INDIAN SCRIPTS FOR WRITING SANSKRIT WORKS. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN

Manuscriptology and Epigraphy

Objective:

Hello viewers, in this episode I am going to talk about Indian scripts for writing Sanskrit works and relationship between language and script.

This episode is of five segments such as,

- 1.1 Introduction
- 2.1 Sanskrit works
- 3.1 Scripts employed in writing Sanskrit works
- 4.1 Relationship between Scope Of Epigraphy:
- 5.1 Conclusion

Introduction:

1.1 Sanskrit was an oldest language of Ancient India. In the vedic period it was only a spoken language. Sanskrit was attained the national status from the 4th century A.D. under the patronage of the Guptas in North India. Similarly, it was under the patronage of the Pallavas of Kanchi, Chalukyas of Badami, Chola, Chera and Pandyas of South India. It was during this period a huge amount of Sanskrit literature has produced in India. By this period, practically the era of the Prakrit language was ended and the new era of the Sanskrit language was

started. The Brahmi script was the mother of all Indian scripts. It was the national script in 3rd century B.C. It was popularly known as Ashokan Brahmi, from this Ashokan Brahmi, all Indian scripts were evolved through the ages.

1.2 Sanskrit Works:

The 4th century A.D. was the Golden Age of the Sanskrit language and literature in the Ancient Indian History. Kalidasa, who was consider as the Shakespeare of Ancient India was patronized under the Guptas. Other great writers of the period were Vishakadatta, Baravi, Dandin and Sudraka and others. It was during this period the Vedas and Vedic literature was written. Shakuntala, Malavikagni Mitra, Megha Duta, Kumara Sambhava, Vikramorvshiya, Raghuvamsha, Ritu Samhara are the best Known Sanskrit works of Kalidasa. Vishakadatta was another great writer of the Gupta period. Mudra Rakshasa and Devi Chandra Guptam are best plays of Vishakadatta written in Sanskrit. The composer of the Allahabad Prashasthi of Samudragupta was also great Sanskrit writer of the period. He narrated the life and achievements of Samudragupta in a beautiful Champu poetic style. Another Sanskrit writer of the Gupta period was Shudraka, he, wrote a popular play Mrichchakatika. Another famous writer of the Gupta period was Bharavi, who wrote Kiratarjuniya. Vishnu Sharma of the Gupta period wrote Panchatantra, Amara Simha composed a Sanskrit lexicon Amarakosha. Another great play writer of the Gupta period was Bhasa, who wrote Urubhanga, Swapnavasavadatta and Pratijna Yaugandarayana. Vatsayana contribute Kamasutra, one of the earliest works on sex. Bharata wrote Natya Shastra a work on dance. Dhandi wrote Kavyadarsha Avanti Sundari Katha.

1.3 Scientific Sanskrit works of the Gupta period:

Progress of various sciences under the Guptas reached to its high water mark. Astronomy, Mathematics, Physics, Medical science, Metallurgy and art and architecture and etc, made great strides in India during this period.

1.3a Aryabhata: A great scientist of Ancient India. He wrote Surya Siddanta, a work on astronomy and Aryabhatiyam a work on mathematics.

1.3b Varahimihira: Another great scientist of Ancient India. He wrote Brihat Samhite and Pancha Siddantike.

1.3c Brahmagupta: He wrote Brahma Sputa Siddanta, a work on gravitation.

1.4d Bhaskaracharya: He wrote two commentaries like Siddanta Shiromani and Maha Bhaskarcharya Bhashya on Aryabhata.

1.5e Vagbhata: He wrote Ashtanga Sangraha, a work on ancient medical science.

1.6f Nagarjuna: A Buddhist scientist of Ancient India.

1.7g Dhanvantari : He was known as “Father of Indian Ayurveda”. ‘Ayurveda Nigantu’ a great work on Ayurveda medicine.

1.8h Palakapya: Another great veterinary scientist of Ancient India. Hastayurveda is a great work on Indian veterinary science.

1.4 The above few references indicate the volume of Sanskrit works produced under the Guptas in North India. In Southern India, under the Kadambas of Banavasi and the Chalukyas of Badami, Sanskrit inscriptions of high poetic quality were produced. For instance, Talagunda pillar inscription of the Kadambas of Banvasi. This classical Sanskrit inscription was composed by Kubja, a court poet under Kakusthavarma. Banavsi pillar inscription of Mrigeshavarma and Gudnpur pillar inscription of Ravivarma are also written in Sanskrit. Besides these stone records, all the Kadamba Copper Plate inscriptions are written in Sanskrit only. Next, the Chalukyas of Badami, Ihole Prashsthi of Chalukya Pulakeshi II, was composed in Sanskrit by his court poet Ravikirthi. It was written in Kannada script. All the Copper-Plate inscription of the Chalukyas of Badami was written in Sanskrit. Under the Pallavas of Kanchi, the Sanskrit received great support. Mahendravarman Pallava was himself a great scholar. He wrote, Mattavilasa Prahasana in Sanskrit. Mandagapattu inscription of Pallava Mahendravarman was written in Sanskrit language and Tamil Grantha script. Large number of Copper-Plate inscriptions of the Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas were written in Sanskrit. Laiden Copper-Plate inscription of the Cholas is the best example of the period. Like the Guptas in North India, the Vijayangar Empire largely supported the Brahmanical culture. During this period the Vedas and Vedic literature was re-written in Sanskrit. Because of their support to Vedic religion, they were called as Vaidika dharma pratistapanacharyas.

1.5 Scripts Employed in Writing Sanskrit Works:

Various scripts were employed for the writing of Sanskrit works in India through the ages. Under the Guptas in North India, Devanagari was preferred to write Sanskrit. In South,

under the Kadambas of Banavasi, the Box-headed Brahmi was used to write the Sanskrit. During the Chalukyas of Badami, Kannada script was preferred to write the Sanskrit. In the further South, under the Pallavas of Kanchi, Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas, Tamil Grantha was used to write the Sanskrit. This thing is very clearly indicate that there was no independent script for writing Sanskrit in Ancient India.

1.6 Relationship between language and script:

Language and script are two important components of a culture and civilization. They are closely related each other. Before, we are going to know about relationship between the language and culture, it is better to know what language is and what script is.

1.7 What is language?

The word language is defined in the English dictionary as;

Language is a system of communication consisting of sounds, words and grammar, or the system of communication used by people in a particular country or type of work.

In another definition; it is defined as,

A system of communication used by a particular country or community is called the language.

1.8 Another definition defined it, the method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of the words in structural and conventional way.

1.9 What is script?

A style of writing with cursive characters is called the script. They are very much symbolic and indicate the inner meaning and that is why the scripts can be identified as symbols or signs.

1.10 In the background of the above definitions, a few things can be understood to us. Such as,

I The language is a system or a method of communication

II It is used in a particular area or a country

III It is used in the form of spoken or written

1.11 The language is basically a cultural trait. In India itself, thousands of languages are there. But, only a few languages having their own scripts and many languages are surviving as only

spoken languages. For example the Sanskrit was basically a spoken language; it does not have its own script. On the other hand languages like Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and others have their own scripts. Kannada written in Kannada script, Telugu written in Telugu script, Tamil written in Tamil script and Malayalam written in Malayalam script are the best examples.

1.12 Any language can be written in any script. So, the Sanskrit is written in Brahmi script, Devangari, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam scripts, and today it is written in English script also. The language and scripts are a two faces of single coin. They are represents culture of a community or a region or a country. If a language dies means a community dies or a culture dies, they are so much important in the human life Manuscriptology and Epigraphy are the two branches of Archaeology. Both are needed specialized skills and knowledge to deal each subjects. The study of manuscripts more or less confined to a room. On the other hand, epigraphy needs both physical and mental stamina to study the inscriptions. Epigraphs are given direct information of historical events in limited manner. But, manuscripts were provided us volumes of information on different subject matters.

1.13 What is Manuscript?

A manuscript is a hand written composition on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf or any other material dating back at least seventy five years that has significant scientific, historical or aesthetic value. Lithographs and printed volumes are not manuscripts. Manuscriptology is a scientific study of Manuscripts, a literary work written manually is a manuscript. They may be available in complete form or partially. The subject matter of the work may be of any kind like science, arts, philosophy and any other matter. A manuscript may have any language, any script and in any subject. Manuscripts are found in hundreds of different languages and scripts, often one language is written in a number of scripts. For example, Sanskrit is written in Kannada script, Oriya script, Grantha script, Devanagari script and many other scripts. Manuscripts are distinct from historical records such as epigraphs on rocks, firmans, revenue records which provide direct information on events or processes in history, manuscripts have knowledge content. But, unfortunately manuscriptology received very little attention by the government or universities and other institutions. The proper collection, scientific preservation, study and publication of the subject or contents found in the manuscripts needed a war foot attention.

1.14 What is Epigraphy?

The word epigraphy is derived from two Greek words viz., 'epi' which means 'on or upon' and 'graphie' meaning 'to write'. Basing on this, Epigraphy may be defined as any descriptive and analytical study of the epigraphs. The word 'Inscription' is also most commonly used as a synonymous with epigraph. This word has been derived from a Latin word *Inscribere* which also gives the meaning 'to write upon.' According to Dr. D. C. Sircar, "Inscription literally means only writing engraved on some object."

The Encyclopedia Britannica states that "Inscriptions are the documents, incised on some hard permanent material in the form of letters or other conventional signs, for the purpose of conveying some information or preserving a record. They are, therefore, to be distinguished on the one hand from manuscripts or documents written on papyrus, parchment, paper or other more or less smoother surfaces by means of a brush reed or pen and some other materials.

1.15 Nature of Manuscript

- Manuscripts are Knowledge based
- They had mass attraction
- They are in the form of books
- Manuscripts are reproduced in multiple number
- They are very handy and easy to carry anywhere
- Manuscripts are contain vast knowledge of various science
- Manuscripts are very important but, short lived

1.16 Let me explain, the above points with suitable examples. The first one is the manuscript are knowledge based. Yes, lore of Indian literature such as the Vedas, Upanisheds, Brahmanas, Aranyakas Puranas and all the Kavyas, the scientific works and autobiographies found in manuscripts only. So, it is called as knowledge based. The second one is they had mass attraction. Ramayana and Mahabharata were written on manuscripts, they had mass appeal. The third one is they are in the form of books, yes, most of the manuscripts found in the form of books. The fourth one is the manuscripts are reproduced in multiple number. Yes, the copying of the manuscripts was a holy practice in India. The fifth one is that they are very handy and easy to carry anywhere, yes, manuscripts are very small in size comparatively, so, that they easy to carry anywhere. For example, so many North Indian Manuscripts are discovered in Southern India, Arthashastra of Koutilya was found in Mysore only. The sixth one is the manuscripts are contain vast knowledge of various science. Yes, ancient Indian knowledge of various sciences was come down to us through manuscripts only. The last one is

the manuscripts are very important but, short lived, yes, since they are written on easily perishable materials like bark, palm leaf so, that they were short lived comparatively then epigraphs.

1.17 Nature of Epigraphy:

After knowing about the definition it is worthwhile to know about the nature of this discipline. Epigraphy has three distinctive stages of study: the first one is taking the copy of written material and the stage is generally called taking estampages, the second one is identifying the letters and reading the literary text and this stage is called deciphering and third one is applying the recorded literary data for the writing of history and this stage is called as “analysis and interpretation”. For the study of inscriptions we needed special materials like Bent beating brush for beating, Daber for applying the ink. As girmar inscription of Rudradaman speaks for the disciplines like Sabda (word), Artha (meaning), Gandharva (music) and Nyaya (law) the stages like Patana (to read), Dharana (to memorize) and Prayoga (application) the epigraphical study also includes three stages of dharana (bearing the copy of the letters), patana(reading) and prayoga (application to historical and cultural perspective). As the epigraphical study is primarily a study related with the letters and words the nature of the subject is more literary and it speaks about the behavior of the writer. Thus the nature of epigraphical studies is more of the behavioral patterns represented in the writings recorded both in public places like temples and other religious institutions, forts and private places like houses and ashramas.

1.18 Scope of Epigraphy:

The scope of the epigraphy of the epigraphical studies is limited to the so-called ancient and medieval periods. Chronologically, at the most, it can be extended up to the end of 17th century. In the context of india the fortunes in history had changed after the European intervention and the pre-European period can be taken as an era for epigraphically studies. Even though written, the epigraphical evidence is quite different from the other types of written documents, which are called generally “archival sources”. Archives is identified by lexicographer as, “usually archives, documents or records relating to the activities, rights, claims, treaties, contributions etc. of a family, corporation, community, nation or historical figure”. These archival sources are more on paper and plam leaves etc. and other easily perishable materal, the stones and copper plates,(even though very few examples like bhattiprolu and taxila records are written on silver plates) which were the order of the day. All

the epigraphs represent a predominant regal tradition in the Indian context. The king was held in honor like Vishnu, the god universal. Na Vishnuh Prthvipatih- and all his actions were held in respect. On the other hand the archival data represents a devastating change in the state society relations, where in the society in its macro dimensions substituted the state in its macro-cosm, the king. Thus, archival data represents an age when literacy was more in quantity and need and the literate people took initiative to share the burden of the state. On the other hand epigraphical data represents an age when literacy was not a necessity but a luxury and the few literate groups engaged in bearing the risk of the statutory administration and activated the direct and indirect exploitation in different social strata

1.19 As far as the technicalities are concerned the first one is related with reading the scripts. This is called “palaeography”, where in palaeo means old or extinct and graphy means science or skill of identifying the symbols(graphs). Hence, palaeography in its totality may be taken as a science for deciphering and reading such scripts, which are very old and not in use at present. The second one is identifying the language in which the epigraph is written. Prakrit, Sanskrit, Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Marathi, Bengali and other distinctive vernaculars were in use. Hence the scope of epigraphy revolves around the relation between the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages, where in Prakrit, Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi etc are Dravidian. After having an identifiable relation established between the script written or inscribed and the language, represented the third stage drags to identify the political, social, economic religious, cultural and literary details of the then life. Thus the scope of epigraphical studies is related with detailing different dimensions of life.

Conclusion:

1.20 In the human history, there are two basic groups of languages. The first one is Indo-European languages and second one is Dravidian languages. The Sanskrit belongs to the Indo-European group of languages. The Sanskrit is our national proud, Sanskrit is our cultural proud, so learn Sanskrit, let learn others to understand India and Indian culture.

THANK YOU ALL.

Assignment

1. Sanskrit is the oldest language in India and the initial stage scripts are written in the Prakrit language. Find Ashoka edicts in Brahmi language

2. In which part of country Brahmi and Kharoshti scripts are written in prakrit language
3. What is Aramic script and language found in Taxila (now in Pakisthan)
4. which has the eulogy of Samudragupta composed by Harisena in which language. (Tulu Brahmi Lipi)
5. Which script was used for Samskrta edicts in North India in the beginning stage
6. Do you say that Sanskrit language have its own script ?
7. Devanagari script edicts is available in South India give examples.
8. Devanagari script edicts is available in North India give examples.
9. Practice Brahmi script and read the following.
10. Practice Tulu Brahmi script and read following manuscript (a single line)
11. Practice cleaning the rock edict/inscription stones with clean water, use medium brush, donot apply any chemical solvent to clean the inscription.
12. Practice using dabber to estampage inscription
13. Practice using bent brush to estampage edicts
14. Practice using 'masi' or color application using dabber
15. Practice using white paper of thickness 100 m and soak in water and practice the way of estampaging.
16. Practice to extract scripts from copper plate –simply apply white ash powder or vibhuti (similar like chalk powder) or use soft stone powder.

FAQ

1. How one can learn devanaagaree script quickly?

A. By looking manuscript and edicts/copperplate inscription comparing script versions with historical perspective one can learn script quickly.

2. Which is the difficult to learn scripts it is almost impossible to learn ?

A. Without knowledge of language almost impossible to learn any script.

3. Name the work authored by Kalidasa.

A. Shakuntala work is authored by Kalidasa.

4. Name the work of Arthashastra and in which language has been used/

Koutilya's work on Political Administration in Sanskrit language.

5. Koutilya Arthashastra written in which script ? Where its been preserved the manuscripts

A: Koutilya's Arthashastra written in Grantha lipi (Today the lipi is called as Tulu Brahmi) and the manuscript is preserved in Mysore University Oriental Manuscript library.

6. What is the name of the archives or library or Department run by Government of India.

A: Archeological Survey of India, at Mysore has its wing working under the guidance of Ministry of Culture.

07. Manuscripts are very important but, short lived why

Manuscripts are written on palm leaves or on bhurjvapatra naturally its survival is considered short lived unless maintained in condition temperature 20 to 22 Degree Celsius and RH (relative humidity) not exceeding 40% to 45% .

08 Epigraphically Source are rock edicts, on hard surface have long life why.

Compare to Manuscript the hard substance like rock have more sustainability still in open air the stone inscriptions safeguarded but not under a tree. Because

under a tree safeguarding inscription spoils quickly during rainy season the drops of water under tree erases the surface of the stone. Safeguarding or duplication possible by of digitizing with planetarium cameras.

09 What is the best alternative to safeguard the rock /stone inscriptions ?

The best opinion is that avoiding sun and rainy shower upon inscriptions; better giving spacious man made shelter and to watch CC tv technology may be adopted.

Quiz

1) Who patronized Sanskrit in North India?

a) **Guptas**

b) Pallavas

c) Kadambas

d) Chalukyas

2) Who was called as Indian Shakespeare?

a) Basa

b) Sudraka

c) **Kalidasa**

d) Baravi

3) Who wrote Raghuvamsha?

a) Baravi

b) **Kalidasa**

c) Dandi

d) Vishakadatta

4) Who wrote Mrichchakatika?

a) **Sudraka**

b) Kalidasa

c) Vatsayana

- d) Harisena
5) Who wrote Kama Sutra?
a) Baskaracharya
b) Varahimihira
c) Vatsayana
d) Kalidasa
6) Who was called as the Father of Indian Ayurveda?
a) Palakapya
b) Dhanvantari
c) Vagbhatta
d) Vatsayana
7) Who wrote Surya-Siddanta?
a) Aryabhatta
b) Brhamagupta
c) Varahimihira
d) Palakapya
8) Who was the court poet of the Kadambas of Banavasi
a) Harisena
b) Kubja
c) Ravikirthi
d) Kalidasa
9) Who wrote Kiratarjuniya?
a) Bharavi
b) Basa
c) Sudraka
d) Kalidasa
10) Who wrote Swpna Vasavadatta?
a) Kalidasa
b) Basa
c) Bharavi
d) Sudraka
10) Which of the following is not belonged to Dravidian languages?
a) Kannada
b) Tamil

- c) **Marathi**
d) Malayalam
- 11) Which of the following is not belonged to Indo-European languages?
a) Hindi
b) Bengali
c) **Telugu**
d) Gujarati
- 12) Which period is called as Golden Age of the Sanskrit language?
a) 2nd century A.D.
b) **4th century A.D.**
c) 6th century A.D.
d) 8th century A.D.
- 13) Which script was employed to write Sanskrit under the Guptas
a) Sharadha Script
b) **Devanagari Script**
c) Box-headed Script
d) Grantha Script
- 14) Which script was employed to write Sanskrit under the Kadambas of Banavasi?
a) Devanagari Script
b) Kannada Script
c) **Box-headed Script**
d) Tamil Script
- 15) Which script was employed to write Sanskrit under the Chalukyas of Badami
a) Telugu
b) Tamil
c) **Kannada**
d) Malayalam

