

The Origin and Development of Odia Script

Bijayalaxmi Dash

Assistant Professor, School of Languages, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, India

Abstract: The topic paleography of Odisha is more valuable, apprehended in the widespread framework of Indian paleography. Obviously for the sake of ambidextrous culture atmosphere of Indian civility. But variety of scripts in India is one and only a posterior advancement. Though entire territorial scripts used present day, as has been generally accepted, are developed out of an initially similar script, i.e. the brahmi script. The script was approximately used in a larger part of India under the mauryas rule (3rd century B.C) and is presently endorsed as the originator of all the provincial scripts of India. The calligraphy transmutation comes to a destination in various rotating periods through the era. In this paper I have discussed the origin and development of odia script.

Keywords: Paleography, Ambidextrous culture, Territorial script.

1. Introduction

Odisha was never a consistent section perpetually of her by gone history. It was colonized by the peoples of kalinga, odra, Tosali, Kongoda, Kosala, Trikalinga, Utkala etc... They were the distinct to topographical subsistence that occurred at several stages of history. In the pre-Christian era, entire present Odisha and a part of territories in the north up to the river Ganga and another in the south up to Godavari was recognized as kalinga with its centric area, enclosing puri and Ganjam districts. The monuments belong to Ashoka (3rd century. B.C.) And kharavela (1st century B.C) are found in this area. In the beginning of the Christian era the whole Odisha was administered in to smaller kingdoms. Each controlled by a ruling presidency.

Even though the political barriers of these kingdoms and territories vacillated from time to time. According to the competence of the ruling empires, the terrain of their centre's and their partial allocations abided particularly unaltered from the 4th-5th to 11th-12th Centuries. The eastern Gangas the Bhaumakara's and the somavanshis proportionately excavated freewheeling sub-provincial kingdoms. Like kalinga, Tosali and south Kosala and settled similarly strengthly territories. The central areas of these sub-territorial kingdoms generally Situated in the river basins that confirmed an economic base for the powers. Each of these sub-territorial powers had a number of ancillary divisions, ruled by the territorial leaders in the tribal wastelands of this kingdom. One of the vital aims of the period is that these powers compete with each other in extending their perimeter of the cost of other neighboring kingdoms and in taking supervision of the central areas of other sub-territorial

kingdoms. These govt. practices carried forward during the whole of the ninth –thirteenth centuries in the creation of a provincial state by the Ganga king Anangabhima deva (A.D - 1211-1238). As well as the process of provincial state creation carried the process of socio-cultural and linguistic absorption of the bygone territorial kingdoms.

'Kalinga', the earliest motherland of Gangas had become their southern border area where as the productive vegetative Mahanadi basin appears as the natural midpoint of their empire. Absolutely it could admit a local coherence to its people. But this had genuine result on account of the history of Odisha of the later era is distinguished by the contest for power, among the andhra's and the oriyas, inside dishonesty, controversy and over whelming civil authority, etc. advertising the inward deficiency of a roughly organized constitutional outer powers pressurized the honesty and integrity of the empire from time to time and eventually the afghans were favorable in plastering the luck of the Independence of Odisha in 1568 A.D. Approximately the Afghans, the moguls (1593-1751) and coming next the Marathas (1751-1803) and the britishers (1803-1947) attacked and ruled over Odisha.

Paleographical experimentation on Odisha can be out lined in the period of James prinsep. Prinsep was a studious, resourceful scholar. First time prinsep achieved in analyzing the Brahmi alphabet. He had successfully analyzed the script beyond the assistance of any bilingual inscription and had constituted that the script was written from left to right, for this, prinsep liked to trust that the Brahmi script commenced from the Greek.

In the year 1820, the inscriptions of khandagiri and udayagiri caves were remarked. "Andrew sterling was the first scholar who noted the inscription. He solicited col. Mackenzie to get ready to prepare the lithograph of the inscription. The replica of the lithograph was spot lighted by sterling in the Asiatic Researches" [1].

In the same year prinsep get off the experimentation of the inscriptions and released his readings along with photocopies arranged by kittoe in the journal of the Asiatic Society, Bengal. [2] coming year he analyzing kittoes Lithograph of Dhauli cave inscription of Ashoka's period and released it in the JASB Journal. As of now a vast no. of inscriptions had been brought to light and the Asiatic society was holding difficult liabilities of published them in its journal. But until prinsep started again the task of clarification of Brahmi inscriptions, epigraphical studies were controlled to examine records only.

Recognition goes for assembling a paleographical chart under the title “Modification of the Sanskrit Alphabet from 543 B.C to A.D 1200”. In the year 1850 another valuable inscription of Jaugada of the time of Ashoka were captured by Sir Walter Elliot. Kerr and senart analyzed the edicts. But the improved elaborated reading in addition to the photo Lithographs were advertised by Buhler in the Archeological survey of south India (I, 144). At this period paleographic ground work in India was its beginning and most of researchers believed the basic idea’s that the letter forms where ends in themselves.

In 1872 an advanced Journal ‘Indian Antiquary’ came into existence under the editorship of James Burgess. The Journal was activated with an objective of increasing the existing “Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal which gave neoteric encouragement to the paleographic research. He was extremely benefitted by examining the previously brought out inscriptions in the first volume of the Journal. He favored to involve the Ashoka’s Jaugada edicts for his south Indian paleographical enquiries. [3] His course of action of disconnecting the chapter of the epigraphic records kalinga into west and east annexes along the dynasties of the chalukyias is confusing. [4]

In addition that he conceived that the few inscriptions of the Gangas of kalinga nagara be a component of tenth century were written in a diversity of south Indian Nagari script and the basis of the Oriya alphabet should be duplicated to that source. [5].

Sir Alexander Cunningham orderly organized all the edicts of Ashoka highlighted in the first volume of his ‘corpus inscription indicarum 1877. [6]

In the same volume he made an another development on the reading of the Hathigumpha inscription by James prinsep. But the photographs of the inscriptions attached to the volume are absolutely faulty and not trust worthy. He formed an allegory of the various syllabify with the disparate members of individual structure and preserving the method of graphics basis of the old Indian Alphabet. [7]

Next we come to another famous contemporary Indologist; R.L Mitra publicized “The Antiquities of Orissa”. 1st volume published in the year 1875 and second one was in 1880 proportionately. In the second part he observed and remarked the inscriptions on the pillars of the passage out leading to the spectator’s council of the Jagannath temple puri and attached the interpretation of the coherent records he mentioned:

“These are in the uriya language and character, Written in most corrupt orthography and syntax.” [8]. Then we come to Gourishankar Hiralal Ojha, create an initial experimental effort in this field. In the year 1894, He wrote a complete expansive book in Hindi named as, ‘Bharatiya prachina Lipimala’ (The paleography of India).

Deciding from the developed and practical effective period that Brahmi had attained, Hiralal Ojha was not in support of impute its basis to any peripheral stating point or ascendancy. He advised the addition of the script without any remarkable change approximately from 500 BC to AD 350 where after two disconnect brooks of writing bifurcated from its main source.

The northern part was divided into the Gupta, the kutila, the Nagari, the sarada and the Bengali scripts. The southern part was divided into the western, the central provincial, the telugukannada, the Grantha, the Kalinga and the tamil scripts. Hiralal Ojha [9] have no doubt that the Oriya script was borrowed from the Bengali which itself started to bifurcate from the Nagari in about 1000 A.D [10] According to Hiralal kalinga script was used in the copper–plate endowments of the Eastern Gangas from 7th to 11th centuries. Even though at the beginning the script appeared like to the square headed aspects of the central provinces, later on, a distinctive miscellany in which the nagari, the Telgu–canaries and the Grantha aspects were hybrid all together. In the year 1918 [11] Ojha’s book was rectified and expanded.

In the year 1895 J.G Buhler wrote a book on the basis of the Brahmi script and verbally fights in support of its Semitic origin. [12] In the coming year he published “magnum opus Indiasche paleographic in German, the English translation of which was made by fleet and published as an appendix to the Indian Antiquary vol xxxiii, 1904. His worked abided to this day as the approved work on the subject. In his writings of the Askan edicts, he divided into two local varieties, the northern and the southern and talked of a third one, named as Dravidi(Bhattiprolu) script. Regarding the Dhauli and Jaugada edicts he writes.

“The southern Variety is most strongly expressed in the Girnar and siddhapura edicts, less clearly in the Dhauli and Jaugada edicts, by differences in signs for A A, kha, ja, ma, ra, sa, the medial ‘I’ and the ligatures with ‘ra. [13]

On the ground of the enlighten of the lower parts of some of the letters, thickening of the top of the upper perpendiculars and of the use of the so called serif, the assembled the inscriptions of kharvela and his ancestors under the old kalinga script. [14]

From the middle of the fourth century A.D he distinguished the northern script in to the Gupta alphabet of the 4th-5th centuries (having two sub-classes, eastern and western), the hooked alphabet of Nepal and the arrow head type (Bhaiksuki lipi). He associated the basis of cursive forms of the northern alphabets to the Ashokas edict (VI) of Dhauli, edicts of kalsi and Jain inscriptions of the Kusana period. (15) The southern alphabets have been divided into six categories. Such as: 1. Western, 2. Central Indian, 3. Telgu – canarese, 4. Later kalinga (Former Madras presidency between chicacole and Ganjam). 5. Grantha 6. Tamil. According to Ojha and Buhler believed that in the later kalinga script of the Eastern Gangas of the 7th, 12th centuries the Nagari, the telugu, the canarese and the Grantha aspects were hybrid together. [16]

Buhler was one of the primitive scholars to use certain paleographical wordings like block-heads, arrow-heads, hooks, cursive, horn–like, etc... Ojha and Buhler also prepared mathematical charts have not been out dated and added to so far. The monograph of S.L. Gokhale is only a collocating of the works of the two earlier paleographers. [17]

From beyond 1910 an enormous dispute blew up among the

researchers like bhagawanlal, Flect R.D Banerji, K.P jayaswal regarding the particular day, significance of the study and paleography of kharavela's Hatigumpha inscriptions after the publication of a book named as "Brahmi inscriptions in the udayagiri and Khandagiri caves". The controversy was concluded. The book was written by B.M Barua. The book encloses a note on "The letter forms." Of the cave inscriptions where Barua keenly observed that the development of the various types of Brahmi alphabet in the Hatigumpha inscription was due to the employment of various copiers symbolizing different local regions. [18]

Pandit Binayak Mishra was one of the antecedent Oriya researchers who manifested some interest in the better study of epigraphy. In the year 1933 he prepared a list of the ruling dynasties of Medieval Orissa. [19] In the year 1934 he published a monograph, named as "Orissa under the Bhauma kings". [20] In this book pandit Binayak compiled 14 inscriptions of the Bhaumakara dynasty and attached the photocopy of a few of them.

In the year 1934, the publication of the "Indian Antiquary" was discarded. But the Epigraphia Indica cared for its high standard. A number of epigraphists have fantastic interests in compiling and clarifying the inscriptions brought to light by Hiralal, R.D. Banerji, B.C Mazumdar, T. C. Rath, Y. R. Gupta, T.C Ratha, R. K. Ghosla, K. C. Panigrahi, P. Acharya and others. In the time of cataloguing the aspects of the inscriptions under various scripts, the studious editors came after Buhler's work as the ground work. At that time so many reputed Journals started publishing from patna, Kolkata and Rajamundry appropriately. Journals like the journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society (1915), the Indian Historical quarterly (1925) and the Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society (1962) etc.

The inscriptions of Orissa were edited and revised in these journals from time to time by the studious scholars like Haraprasad Shastri, Binayak Mishra, H. Pandey, N. Tripathy, A. Banerje, G. Ramdas, C. N. Rao, R. Subba Rao, and others. In the second quarter of 20th century there was a developed increasing interest among the Oriya scholars to stretch out the history, archeology and culture of Orissa. At that time there was not a single historical journal in English in Odisha to provide their needs.

Journals like 'prachi' (1931), The journal of the Orissa Academy (1939) and the journal of the kalinga Historical Research society (1946) published chronologically from Cuttack and Balangir for a short period and were discarded. But some of the important inscriptions of Orissa were brought to light by these volumes. In the year 1952 'The Orissa Historical Research Journal' was published. The main objective of the journal was to revive the culture, archeology of Odisha. Newly discovered copper-plates and stone inscriptions of Orissa were edited and re-edited from time to time in the volumes of the journal. Satyanarayana rajguru was edited majority of the inscriptions. K. C. Panigrahi, B. V. Nath, K. B. Tripathy, S. C.

De, P. Acharya, S. N. Das also edited few inscriptions.

The developed paleography of Buguda (Ganjam) and Puri plates of the Sailodbhava king Madhavavarman had raised some issues to materialize the genealogy and chronology of the family. The discarded issues in the paleography of Ganjam and Khurda plates on one side and the Buguda and Puri plates as well as the aspects raised by the son and grandson of the issuer of the Buguda and Puri records on the other led Hultsch and Kielhorn to suggest that the 1st group was the ancestor of the second. [21] Finally, when S. C. Behera planned and prepared a book on the basis of History of the dynasties. In this book he attached a chapter on "paleography and Language in sailodbhava charters". After that kunjabihari tripathy analyzing the paleography of the early Oriya inscriptions and publicized his conclusions in three segments in the last volumes of OHRJ [22] Main aim was to analysis the script of early Oriya Inscriptions Between the age of AD1051-1568. His analysis based on the various aspects of the inscriptions of Orissa before the half way of the eleventh century was comprehensive. He divided the script of Orissa into Six categories. Such as The Brahmi (2) the Gupta (3) the acute-angled (7th to 10th. Century) (4) the proto-Bengali (5) early Oriya (6) Modern Oriya He checked and noticed that the acute angled script(7th-10th) hypothesized apparent features leading up to the modern Bengali Script, which can be called- proto-Bengali.

The proto Bengali aspects were accustomed in the endowment of the sumavamsis, the gangas, etc... He outlined the progression of the early Oriya script on the basis of three sources. Such as Proto-Bengali, the Nagari and the later kalinga script. According to Kunja bihari Tripathy, "The oriya script is more akin to the proto Bengali than to the modern Bengali. It has preserved many Proto-Bengali forms which Bengali has discarded. He analyzed the creation of individual letter forms such as vowels and consonants, along with the central vowels and connections. All these themes of kunjabihari tripathy have been assimilated in his creation. [23] The twelve paleographical frame works attached in this book. These are the explanatory of the evolution of the early Oriya script. In the field Origin and evolution of Odia script, K. B. Tripathy made an admirable achievement. His effort has not been out dated in the contemporary period. In the year 1960, Satya narayan Rajguru also made a remarkable achievement regarding the study of the Oriya script in his book "Odia Lipira kramavikasa." (The Evolution of the Oriya script) in Oriya language. The book is the elementary source of Odia script. So far concerned the outspread ground work in which he imprinted the growth and development of the Oriya script is informative. By the way of different stages the developed of the script has been given like this:

- Mauryan Brahmi (300 BC)
- Later Brahmi (100 BC-AD-300)
- Gupta A. D. (300-700) Medieval Kalinga(A.D.600-1100)
- Box – headed (A.D.400-800)

- Modern Oriya (A.D. 400 onwards)

Between the years 1958 to 1976 the Better chronicle of his work also came to light in various steps in the Oriya journal 'Konark'. Rajguru published all the inscriptions of Orissa in five volumes. Except Bhaumakars and their feudatories. [24] The sixth volume of the series consisting of the Inscriptions of the Bhanjas. It was compiled by S. Tripathy in the year 1974. [25].

A. H. Dani carryout the analysis of Indian paleography in the year 1963. The main objective of the study was to prepare a systematic methodical groundwork and constructed a detailed analysis of the subject up to eight century A. D. Dani create a noteworthy achievement both at the imaginative and explanatory level. He decorated the aspects of twenty- three plates of different varieties of script which are completely embracive. Dani complemented the theory of upasak that no provincial variety did exist in the Ashokas brahmi. [26] He incorporated the Hathigumpha inscription of kharavela in the regional Brahmi script used in eastern India. [27]

The script used in the inscriptions of the Mataras, the sarabhapuriyas and the eastern Gangas to the end of the seventh century have been chained under proto-regional Decani style whereas the script used in the inscriptions of Eastern Gangas after the 7th century have been categorized under the proto-regional Andra style. [28] Thus the localization of writing styles and their incorporation to various cultural regions was the supervising fundamental principles of Dani for the analyzing Indian paleography. For that intention he rejected the former terminologies like acute-angled, box-headed, arrow-headed etc. The line of controversy introduced by Dani that the varieties in the collection of the writing tool and the method often modified the face of the letters was hence forth analyzed by T. P. Varma while learning the 'paleography of Brahmi script in north India' in the year 1971. As respects the paleographical qualities of the Hathigumpha inscription, he clarify that, "Orissa was less informed of the new developments (the new-pen-style) and kept adhering with the older forms for sometimes" [29].

'Indian Epigraphy and paleography' Article published in the 'journal of Ancient India History (1970-71). D. C. Sircar favored to alternative the term 'Gaudi' for Buhler's proto-Bengali on the authority of al-beruni and held that 'Gaudi' i.e the East Indian borrowed of the siddhamatrika alphabet, was used in Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Nepal and Orissa from 10th to 14th century [30] In addition that he believed that the Oriya alphabet was borrowed from Gaudi and its improvements was concluded in the records of about the fourteenth century. [31] Sircar held this point of view even while compiling a number of copper plates and stone inscriptions of the Empirical Gangas of 12th-14th centuries in the journal 'Epigraphic Indica volumes 28-33.

In an unattached chapter in the book "Early stone Temples of Orissa (1979) Vidya Dehejia made an intellectual work on the development of the scripts of Orissa up to 10th century A.D.,

By giving paleography frame works of the inscriptions of the sailodbhavas, the Bhaumakaras, the Bhanjas and also some of the temple inscriptions of the period. [32] In the year 1984, N.K sahu narrated an additional chapter in his book 'kharavela' on the topic the paleography of the Hathigumpha inscription. [33] But the sketch made on hypothetical shapes of the vowel and consonant signs of the inscription are of simple by nature.

Recently the ICHR has launched the resourceful programmed of the publication of the inscription of India. In this chain, the inscriptions of some of the ruling families of Orissa have already been published. The significant achievements of R. Subramanyam, (Inscriptions of the suryavanshi Gajapatis of Orissa (ISGO), New Delhi, 1986, A.M Shastri, (Inscriptions of the sarbhapuriyas, pandavamsins and somavamsins (ISPS), 2pts, New Delhi, 1995), S. Tripathy (Inscriptions of Orissa, I (circa fifth-Eighth centuries A.D.), N. Delhi, 1997). In this supervision are admirable.

2. Conclusion

This paper presented on overview on the origin and development of Odia script.

References

- [1] Asiatic Researches. 15.313 FF.
- [2] "Notes on the inscriptions at udayagiri and khandagiri in Cuttack in Lat characters" JASB-Journal of the Asiatic society of Bengal), 6(1837), 1072-91, PL-58.
- [3] A.C Burnell, Elements of south India paleography from the 4th to the 14th century AD, 2nd edn, London, 1878, Indian edition, Delhi, 1968, 11.
- [4] A.C Burnell - - -, 23.
- [5] *ibid*, 53.
- [6] A. Cunningham, corpus, inscriptionum Indicarum(CII), I, inscriptions of Ashoka, London, 1877; Indian edn, Varanasi, 1961, 15-20, 65-81, 88-93, pls.VIII-XIII(for Dhauli and Taugada edicts.
- [7] *Ibid*, 49-63.
- [8] R.L Mitra, the Antiquities of Orissa, II, Calcutta, 1880.120.
- [9] *Ibid*, 42-44.
- [10] *Ibid*, 43.
- [11] *Ibid*, 44.
- [12] J.G. Buhler, on the origin of Indian Brahmi Alphabet, 3rd edn, Varanasi, 1963, 4.
- [13] Buhler, Indian paleography (IP). Calcutta 1959-60.
- [14] Buhler, Indian paleography (IP), Calcutta, 1959, 68.
- [15] *Ibid*, 74-77.
- [16] *Ibid*, 98.
- [17] S. L. Gokhale, India Numerals, Poona, 1966.
- [18] B.M. Burua, old Brahmi Inscriptions in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves culcutta, 1929, 145-53.
- [19] B. Mishra, Dynasties of Medieval Orissa, Calcutta, 1933.
- [20] "Orissa under the Bhauma kings (OUBK), Calcutta, 1934.
- [21] E L, 6, 144, *ibid*, 7, 102.
- [22] 1955-60, K. B. Tripathy, "The Palaeography of the Early Oriya inscriptions," OHRJ, 4(1-2), 11-27, 5(3-4), 144-55, 8(3-4), 187-93.
- [23] "The Evolution of Oriya language and script (EOLS) (EOLS, CTC, 1962, Ch-9A-4D, 36-81.
- [24] S. N. Rajguru, Inscriptions of Orissa, 1(2)-5, Berhampur and Bhubaneswar, 1958-76.
- [25] S. Tripathy, Inscriptions of Orissa, 6, BBSR, 1974.
- [26] *Ibid*, 35.
- [27] A.H. Dani, Indian paleography (IP), 2nd edn. Delhi, 1986, 57-59.
- [28] *Ibid*, 176-91.
- [29] T. P. Verma, paleography of Brahmi script in north India, Varanasi, 1971, 90.

- [30] D. C. Sircar, "Introduction to Indian Epigraphy and paleography," JAIH, 4(1-2), 1970-71,120.
- [31] Ibid, 122.
- [32] V. Dehejia, Early stone Temples of Orissa, Delhi, 1979, 154-72.
- [33] N. K. Sahu, Kharavela, BBSR, 1984, 262-79.