

ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS OF ODISHA RELATE TO ODISSI MUSIC

Dr. Niladri Kalyan Das

Assistant Professor, Department of Vocal Music,
Utkal University of Culture, Bhubaneswar

ABSTRACT

Music cannot be conceived without language. It is known that first writing and then a beautiful form of language were introduced to the masses. Writing has been in use in the world since 4000 BC. Writing was first used in Egypt, Sumer and India. According to Professor D.R. Bhandarkar, the Indians knew the use of writing even from the time of the composition of the 'Rigveda'. The present day of this Indian Brahmi script comes from the year marks carved on a clay pot of the historical era found near Hyderabad. The period of development of the Indus Valley Civilization is considered as the historical era. The reading of the Sindhav script used during the Indus Valley Civilization has not been possible yet. The Yogimathasra pictograph extracted from Chhatti Odisha is also a script of the prehistoric era, which has not been possible to read even today. Brahmi script is considered to be the oldest and most readable Indian script. This is not entirely true because before Brahmi script, Indians used other types of scripts. Among the scripts found on stone, stone inscriptions, 4 leaves, wooden pillars, copper plates, inscriptions, seal inscriptions, clay tablets, clay inscriptions, tablet inscriptions, paper, etc., stone is the oldest.

KEY WORDS: Music, Religion, Inscription, Civilisation, Odissi, Kalinga, Manuscript.

'Sila' is the Suttanta or way of life of the followers of Vedic religion. Which Buddha said during his sermon during his lifetime. Between 500 and 450 BC, a special book was written about the Surantas and this book was written in Brahmi script. The ancient Indian writings found on tree bark, Bhurja leaves and palasani Poth etc. are the scriptures of Buddhism. The ancient writings found on stone tablets or metal plates are related to Buddhism. The ancient scripts of India were first invented by the Dravidians, not the Aryans. Therefore, before the Aryans, the Dravidians and Nishads settled in India and used the alphabet in writing. It can be said that the Aryan culture of India is the Ragvedic culture. The Dravidian culture had spread long before this. Again, the Nishad culture was prevalent long before the Dravidian culture. The Nishad culture is the oldest culture in India. Uddiyan was known as the seat of the Nishad culture. According to the Chinese traveler Xuanzang, Uddiyan was a special part of Kosala, which extended from modern Budh to Bilaspur. The ancient culture of Odisha is a mixture of three cultures, namely Utkal, Kosala and Kalinga. Ancient copperplates and inscriptions have been found in various places in Odisha. Copperplate of Udaya Varaha and gold coins of Habiska have been found in Bonaigarh in Sundargarh district. Apart from various scripts and languages, these are known to have adequately displayed various cultural aspects of that time. A small part of the Vedas and Vedic literature has been found in Poth Kashmir and Odisha. Especially the Atharva Veda Papilad Samhita was not found for a long time and it was suspected that it had been lost. But it was found in Balasore district of Odisha. During the time of Emperor Ashoka, many stone inscriptions were carved in Pali language, out of which 34 stone inscriptions have been described by the French scholar M. Senart in his book Inscriptions Piyads.

In 1783, Sir William Jones was appointed to the Calcutta High Court. With his tireless efforts and the efforts and patronage of some other British administrators, the 'Asiatic Society' was formed in 1784. After this, the study of Indian archives was started by Charles Wilkins. Another scholar of this 'Asiatic Society', James Prinsep (1799-1840), read the inscriptions of the Udayagiris Elephant Cave carved in Brahmi script by Kharavela in 1837 and also read the Ashoka's ashlar inscriptions. Along with this, Indian researchers also started reading the inscriptions or archives carved in Odisha. See K.P Jayaswal, R.L Mitra, Haraprasad Sastri, Manmohan Chakrabarty.

Nagendranath Vasu, R.D Banarji etc. Similarly, the study of archives was also started by the Odisha people. This was possible after the formation of the 'Odisha Academy' by the Gajapati Krishnachandra Narayan Deb of Paralakhemundi. In the journals published by the Academy, many information related to the archives of Odisha were made public in the articles written by Pandit Binayak Mishra and Satyanarayan Rajguru. Later, Maharaja Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo of Patnagarh (Balangir) established the Kalinga Historical Research Society in 1945-46. His long-time predecessor, Maharaja Pratap Keshari Deo of Kalahandi, encouraged writers to publish information related to the archives by establishing a museum. In 1948, the 'Odisha Rajya Sangrahalay' was established. The Orissa Historical Research Society was continuously published from 1958 onwards. As a result, many archival texts of Odisha were made public.

The rock inscriptions found in Odisha at Bikramkhol, Jogimara, Sitabengala, Ulfagarh, Manikgada etc. are pre-Ashoka. Or were carved before 261 BC. Among these, the Bikramkhol inscription is the oldest, which is pre-Brahmi script. Rock inscriptions were carved in Dhauli and Jaugardh in Odisha in the 3rd century BC. Ashoka's edicts in Brahmi script and Pali language It is known to have been carved by. After Ashoka, in the first century AD, a rock inscription was carved in the Hatigumpha cave of Udayagiri hill in Bhubaneswar, Odisha by Samata Kharavela. Odisha can be said to be the pioneer in the field of script and writing in the whole of India. Kharavela himself is mentioned in the Hatigumpha rock inscription as an expert in script and writing. The words related to this are "Tato Lekh-Rup-Chumra-Vyavahar-Vidha, Visaraden". The spread of Indian music is known to have started from the Vedic age and was developed and widely spread during the reign of Bharata Muni, Narada Muni, Tumburu, Darila, Kohla and Matanga Muni. The above-mentioned wonders are known to have appeared after the 2nd century AD. Although there are different opinions regarding the exact date of Bhatara Muni, most scholars date him to the 3rd century. Long before him, Gandharva knowledge had flourished and reached its peak of excellence in Tosala, Radra, Utkal and Kalinga.

The Hatigumpha inscription at Udayagiri, which shows that the Kalinga emperor Kharavala himself played a leading role in the dissemination of Gandharva literature in the first century BC, is famous as the oldest inscription related to Gandharvas. It is written in the then prevalent Pali language, in combination with the Brahmi script. The line mentioned about this Gandharva is "Gandhav Veda Budho Dapanata Geeta Vadita Sandas Nahi Usava Samaj Karap Nahi Cha Krida Payati Nagarin." The literal translation of this is – Gandharva Vidya Pravin Kharavala organized festivals and societies with various performances, as if the entire city was in a state of excitement.

A prehistoric rock art has been discovered in the undivided Kalahandi district. It is believed that the rock inscription carved in Vikram Khol was carved long ago. Therefore, while no one calls the Gudhandi painting (about 15th millennium BC) a script, many researchers refer to the painting found in Jogimath (which is about 10th millennium BC) as a prehistoric script. It can be assumed that the language of this script was the language of the primitive Adhuvas of that time in terms of regionalism. Similarly, a reasonable presentation in this regard has been published by Nilamani Sahabi in Odisha District gazetteers, Kalahandi, 1971, page no. 35. The drawings in the Jogimath hill near Khariar are very likely prehistoric writing in two or three lines written from right to left. The pictographs consist of hills, wavy lines, implements, musical instruments as well as animals and human figures all having their movement towards the left direction. The paintings at Gudahandi may be placed about 15th millennium B.C., but those at Jogimath are somewhat at later period and may be assigned to about 10th millennium B.C. Pictographic paintings are found in the hill caves near Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh, near Singhnpur in Raigarh district of Madhya Pradesh (Now Chhatisgarh) and at Vikram Khol and Ulapgarh in Sambalpur district, Odisha. Such paintings in the district of Kalahandi are a new final in this sphere and requires proper investigation and research.

The Vikramkhol inscription is believed to have been in use in Kalinga or Udara (Odisha) since at least 2000 AD. It has not been possible to read it yet. The Semitic script may not have any similarity with the script mentioned in the Saindhava script and the Vikramkhol inscription, but the Brahmi script has the influence of Saindhava and Vikramkhol scripts. It can be said that during the Mahabharata war, the three groups of people, Dravidian, Nishad and Aryan, lived together in Kalinga. The people of Kalinga had a

great contribution in the development of the Brahmi script. Stone inscriptions play a major role in Odisha as an image of various aspects of culture along with literature, music. The medieval script of both Saindhava and Brahmi scripts is found in Vikramakhhol of Kalinga. Six Odisha District gazetteers, Sambalpur, Page No.551-554 66 K.P. Jayaswal & Digi The Vikramkhhol inscription supplies a link between the passage of letters forms from the Mahenjodaro script to Brahmi. The Vikramkhhol record, however need not necessarily be an Aryan piece of writing. Now what would be the age of the Vikramkhhol inscription? The writing is certainly earlier than the earliest specimen of Brahmi known so far, and Brahmi was completed before 1500 B.C. We would be within the range of a fair approximation in dating it about 1500 B.C.

While some have referred to the Vikram-Khol inscription as a stone inscription or a pictorial script, K.P. Jayaswal has proved it to be a stone inscription and the ancestor of the Brahmi script. Again, on the eighth page of the Jyotilekha (1957) book, Shivaprasad Dasha has made a case in this regard - The characters in Vikram-Khol inscription belong to a period intermediary between the script of Mahenzodaro and Brahmi. Some letters still retain their original or secondary Mahenzodaro forms and some have assumed the Brahmi or proto Brahmi forms, This proves the origin of Brahmi to be Indian and throws a flood of light on the history of writing, as from Brahmi the Phoenician and European scripts are derived. It is natural for some to consider it a stone inscription because if someone suddenly sees it, they will call it a pictorial script. In it, along with the shapes of some animals and birds, various musical instruments and some scenes related to the daily life of people are effortlessly depicted. It also creates the illusion of various tools used at that time.

It is believed that the Ulapagarh inscription was made in the 3rd millennium BC. The ruins of this ancient fort are located about 15 km from Vikramakhhol in the Jharsuguda district of modern Odisha. Some rock paintings or inscriptions are visible in the caves here. Which are considered to be pre-Brahmi inscriptions dating back 5000 years and are still being deciphered today.

It has not been possible. At the same time, such rock paintings have also been found from Ambijhol Khol, Kamahmoda and Manikmunda in Odisha. Similarly, many rock paintings of reptiles, quadrupeds and humans have been carved on the hill adjacent to Singhanpur village near Raigarh in Chhattisgarh. There is a cave called Ushakuti with some square and rectangular stone-lined kundas in Ulapagarh. Although no clear information has been found from the paintings painted in these, the painting shown in Ushakuti, if examined very carefully, creates the illusion of a musical instrument hanging on a pole. After examining this, A.N. Dutt has shown that these are from the Paleolithic period, i.e. 50,000 years ago.

The Laxman Deula inscription is believed to have been carved in the 3rd century BC or slightly earlier. Although it is not located in Odisha today, it served as the capital of South Kosala for a long time. It is currently 50-60 km from Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh state. It is located 50-60 km away. Along with the ruins of the Baidvihara and the temple of Sripur, a 6-foot-high Buddha statue, Chinese copper coins and the Laxman Deula inscription have been discovered. The Sitabengala Darigriha inscription is also known to have been carved during this period. The Sitabengala Darigriha inscription and the Yogimada inscription are known to have been carved on the Ramgarh hill in Surguja taluk near Jharsuguda in modern Odisha, long before Emperor Ashoka. The inscription on the Yogimada hill discussed earlier was mentioned to have a picture of a musical instrument.

Again, in this Ramgarh hill, in a cave called Sitbengala, there is a stage measuring 45 feet long and 24 feet wide, and there is also an arrangement such that seats are arranged in a semicircular auditorium. It can be accepted without a doubt that such arrangements were made for the enjoyment of various cultural programs along with the organization of them. The opinion of the famous researcher Shivprasad Dash seems to be correct that these two stone inscriptions were carved in the third century BC.

In the 3rd century BC, a new cave was discovered near the Sitabengala cave on the Ramgarh hill in the Surguja region, which is named Yogimada or Yogimada. In this cave, monochromatic images of Narbhaka and Narbhaki are carved. The stone inscription quoted here is in the Magdhi language, carved in Brahmi script. Although Ashoka's Dhauli Edict, which was carved contemporary to it, does not mention any

information related to music, it does reveal many information related to religious practices and rituals. This may have been a reflection of Emperor Ashoka's anti-maternal attitude towards music and dance in particular. It is known that the Hatigumpha inscription was carved in stone by the great cloud-carrier Ira Kharavela in the first century BC. It was written in the then Brahmi script and Adhamagadhi language. The study of its fifth line shows that Kharavela, a scholar of Gandharva, organized various cultural programs including dancing, singing and music. The entire city was in a festive mood to organize this festival and society.

In 1056 AD, the Brahmaswar temple inscription was carved in Sanskrit by King Udyota Keshari of the Keshari clan. After the KharavelaHathigumpha inscription, detailed information about the discussions related to classical music, music and dance in Utkal is available from this Brahmaswar temple inscription. Especially for its performance, drama temples were built in the temples of that time and a long tradition was also created in its construction. After this, information about the musical discussions of Odisha is available in the Megheshwar temple inscription, the Jaya Vijaya Dwar inscription of the Sri Jagannath temple and the Ananta Vasudeva temple inscription. Again, in the Odia translation of the Megheshwar temple inscription, Kedarnath Mahapatra has stated that the god Supteswar Devah employed beautiful women with a hunter's eye in the service of Tripura-jayiMegheshwar Shiva. During the dance, the light of Diwali was scattered carelessly inside the temple by the light emanating from their garlands. Similarly, in the 12th century, the Sonepur temple is known to have been carved in stone and mentioned about various talas. Since this was done in the 12th century, it was written in the rich Odia language of that time. For example:- “Ye harai ta mundarebrahmataal, rudrataal padi.”

The stone inscription of Chandrakanda Devi (Chandradevi) in the Ananta Vasudeva temple, dated 1200 century or 1278 AD, has been published by researcher Paramananda Durwa. It is mentioned in Prakrit language. Especially in the sense of emotion, Chandrakanda Devi's husband Paramardi is introduced as a poet and king. Paramardi Dev belongs to the Kalachuri or Haihaya dynasty and he married Chandrakanda Devi, the daughter of the third Anangabhim Dev. Chandrakanda Devi was a skilled singer and had acquired special knowledge in singing, rhythm and rhythm. It is mentioned in this regard that - "Gitajya Laya-Tal-Narjana-Kala Kaushalyasu". Whose wife was skilled in music; it can be assumed without a doubt that her husband was definitely a Kalanuragi. Even being skilled in music himself is not unusual. There is also a legend that he himself played the flute. After his death in a battle with the Nawab of Bengal, his wife Chandraka Devi built the Ananta Vasudeva Temple in Bhubaneswar, the city of Shaiva in 1278. This is the only temple dedicated to Lord Krishna in the Shaivite sect, perhaps to give due respect to the flute player Swami.

It was built for this purpose. Although detailed information about this is not mentioned in the Ananta Vasudeva Temple inscription, detailed information about the music of Odisha is presented in the texts and books of that time.

The sixth stone inscription on the left side of the Jaya Vijaya Dwar of Sri Jagannath Temple, which was carved between the time of Prataparudra Dev 1497-1538. During the time of Gajapati Prataparudra Dev, Odissi music reached its peak. This is known from the examination of this stone inscription. Keeping in mind the love of Kala Thakur's art, the excellence of singing and musical services was demonstrated. While 36 Niyogas or servants were appointed in the service of Mahaprabhu, dance-singing-musicians have a considerable predominance among them. The services that complete this service are singers, veena players, modelis and Samprada Niyogas etc.

Gajapati Prataparudra Dev was a warrior, a devoted follower of his subjects, a religious man, and a connoisseur of literature, music, and the arts. During his time, Puri Dham gained fame as a centre of religion, culture, literature and music. It is known from a record that Prataparudra Dev was adorned with the title 'Sangita Sahitya Sanglap'. The inscription at the Jayavijay Gate of the temple reveals that Prataparudra Dev made the singing of 'Sri Geeta Govinda' compulsory in the temple of Shri Jagannath and prohibited the singing of any other song. The information mentioned in the inscription in this regard is being reproduced

here in its original form in the Odia language of that time. An attempt is also being made to mention its meaning.

He was instructed not to learn any song, not to sing any song, not to perform any dance in the presence of God. That is, there was also an order not to learn or sing any song other than Gita Govinda. There are Vaishnava singers in this theatre, and they will sing Giti-Govinda songs. That is, four Vaishnava devotees appointed in the temple used to sing Gita Govinda. It was from these that the instruction was given to receive Gita Govinda lessons. Therefore, it is rightly said that, "The uneducated will learn Gita Govinda by listening to it in unison. He will not teach any other Gita." That is, a prohibition was issued on learning any other song. In this context, it was also said that, if the order was ignored and another dance song was performed, it would be considered a misbehaviour of Lord Jagannath.

The extensive presence of Odissi music is evident from the records of Odisha presented in this chapter. There is a great need for proper research and investigation in this regard, which can further establish Odissi music as a unique form of Indian musical tradition. It can be hoped that this will provide the right guidance to the next generation.

REFERENCES

1. 'Aama Odia Bhasa', Dr. Kirtan Narayan Parhi, Aama Odisha, Bhubaneswar, first edition 2014, p.p.13.
2. 'Prachina Utkal', Vol.I, Jagabandhu Singh, Odisha Sahitya Academy, Bhubaneswar, Fourth Edition, 2013, p.p.32.
3. 'Odishi Sangeetara Itihasa', Dr. Kirtan Narayan Parhi, Jayadeva Foundation Trust, first edition 2005, p.p.6.
4. 'Odishara Sanskrutika Itihasa', Vol.III, Dr. Satyanarayan Rajguru, Odisha Sahitya Academy, Bhubaneswar, Second Edition 2004, p.p.22.
5. 'Odishara Sanskrutika Itihasa' Vol.II, Dr. Jangya Kumar Sahoo, Odisha Sahitya Academy, Bhubaneswar, Second Edition 2001, p.p.28.
6. 'Odissi Sangeetara Itihasa', Dr. Kirtan Narayan Parhi, Jayadev Foundation Trust, Bhubaneswar, First Edition 2005, p.p. 26.
7. 'Prachina Utkal' Vol.II, Jagabandhu Singh, Odisha Sahitya Academy, Bhubaneswar, Fourth Edition, 2013 p.p.32.

Copyright & License:

© Authors retain the copyright of this article. This work is published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0), permitting unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.