

A CERTIFICATE COURSE
IN
INDIAN EPIGRAPHY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KERALA

Syllabus
and
Lesson Plan

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A Certificate Course in Indian Epigraphy

Curriculum

Epigraphy means the study of inscriptions. It is auxiliary to history . There are innumerable records pertaining to ancient and medieval times that are preserved. History of systems of writing and the evolution of script are topics relevant in epigraphy. It involves the long process of gradual transition from orality to literacy. Epigraphy should be an integral part of the study of History, Linguistics and Culture.

The course now offered, in the first place, is envisaged as a training programme to equip the students of Indian History with the knowledge that is necessary for consulting original documents written in archaic scripts. Secondly, the course has in its focus the early Indian experience of the transition from orality to literacy. Thirdly, it is designed in such a way as to help students know the evolution of modern Indian scripts

Aims and objectives:

1. To familiarise candidates with ancient Indian systems of writing
2. To Train them in preparing mechanical estampage of Stone inscriptions and copper plates, and transcribing archaic records into modern scripts
3. helping students to interpret and explain epigraphs in relation to problems of dating and contents.
4. Familiarising them with different types of inscriptions including royal orders, charters, agreements, land grants etc.
5. Tracing the development of epigraphic study and publications in India (Epigraphia Indica, Epigraphia Carnatica, Annual reports of epigraphy, South Indian Inscriptions, Travancore Archeological Series, Cochin epigraphical supplement, Bulletins of Ramavarma Research Institute)

6. To familiarise them with eras like, Kali era, Saka era, Kollam era etc. And chronograms and Katapayadi system
7. To study some important inscriptions of Kerala.

Lesson Plan : Theory

Problem of Decipherment: Ancient Indian Systems of Writing

The Enigma of the Indus Script-Transition from orality to literacy, the early Indian experience- emergence of writing in India - Decipherment of Brahmi, a brief account of antiquity of Brahmi-Brahmi and its Variants-Northern Brahmi-Southern Brahmi, its special features-evolution of the early Brahmi in historical outline - Regional Scripts- Grantha, Vattezhuthu and Kolezhuthu.

Problem of Classification : Categories of Epigraphic Records

Nature of Epigraphical Documents – Classification by form – Classification by content– Praśastis, royal writs – Trade charters, Rules and regulations regarding duties as well as management of properties–and their properties- Religious gifts and their qualifications– Rare records of musical notation and the text of a drama- literary manuscripts .

Problem of Dating : Methods of Reckoning of time and the Indian Eras

Ancient Indian Concepts of time – circular time- linear time- Reckoning of time- Katapayadi - Bhūta sankhya - Regnal year system - Beginning of continuous Reckoning of time, The Kushana inscriptions – System of dating- Saka, the Kushanas and their reckoning of time- the Vikrama era, the Gupta, Regional eras- the Kollam era etc.

Problem of interpretation : Written Word and the Construction of Meaning

Linguistic statements in structural perspective– whether the ‘meaning’ is inside or outside the text – meaning and significance of inscriptions and other old records as produced by the reader – a ‘reader – response’ perspective in interpreting archaic records – readings and interpretations of the same records by different scholars –

the role of time and space in interpreting a document – framing questions and finding answers

Lesson Plan : Practical Training

1 Preparing charts of (a) Mauryan Brahmi (b) Southern Brahmi (c) Vattezhuthu
(d) Kolezhuthu (e) Grantha

2 Deciphering documents:

Brahmi: i) Rummindei edict of Asoka
 ii) Girnar, 14th edict of Asoka
 iii) Nasik cave inscription of Gautamiputra Satakani

Transitional : iv) Thirunatharkunnu inscription
 v) Trivandrum Museum inscription

Vattezhuthu : vi) Thiruvalla Plates(selected portions)
 vii) Tarisappalli Copper plate of Sthanu Ravi – regnal year 5
 viii) Perunchellur Copperplate

Kolezhuthu : ix) yathrakali copper plate
 x) Mulankaranam
 xi) Olakkaranam

Grantha: xii) Kurumathur Prasasti of Rajasekhara

This list contains only a few samples of documents to be covered in the programme. More records are to be taken for decipherment. This practical training should be followed by trips to actual sites of original stone inscriptions and decipherment of those records *in situ*.

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Charts

MauryanBrahmi

TamilBrahmi

Vattezhuthu

Kolezhuthu

Grantham

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Reading List

Buhler, G (1896) *Indische Paeographie* (Eng.Tr. J.F.Fleet in Indian Antiquary,
Vol.xxxiii, 1904

Burnell, A.C (1874), *Elements of South Indian Paleography*

Dani, A.H., (Indian edition,1986) *Indian Paleography*.

Gopinatha Rao, T.A., *Travancore archaeological Series*,Vol.I&II

Heras, Rev.H, *Proto-Indo Mediterranean*, Bombay, 1953

Mahadevan, Irvatham (2003) *Early Tamil Epigraphy*, Harward University

Mahalingam, T.V., (1954) *Early South Indian Paleography*, Madras university

Ojha,G.H (1894), *Bharatiya Prachinalipimala (hindi)*

Pandey, Raj Bali (1952), *Indian Pleography*, Varanasi

RaghavaVarier, M.R (1998), *Social Roots of the Early Indian Palaeography*,

Presidential Address, Indian History Congress, 50th session, Section V,

Epigraphy, Historical Archaeology and Numismatics.

————— *Studies in Indian Palaeography* (forthcoming)

Sircar,D.C., (1965) *Indian Epigraphy*, Delhi

----- (1942) *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, Calcutta

Sivaramamurthi, (1952), *Indian Paleography and South Indian Scripts*, Bulletin of the
Madras Govt. Museum, Vol.III no.4.

Upasak.C.S.(1960),*The History and Paleography of the Mauryan Brahmi Sript*,
Nalanda

Dr. N. Sam, (2004) *Keralathile Pracheena Lipi mathrikakal(mal)*, ,Thiruvananthapuram

Subramanian, T.N ((1966), *Pantaitamil Eluttukal*, (Tamil), Madras.

Evaluation

At the end of the course there will be a written test and Viva Voce including practicals as prescribed by the Visiting professor in Charge of the Course. Students will be graded according to their performance.

List of Course Experts & Faculty

Prof.M.R. Raghava Varier (Course Professor)

Prof, MGS Narayanan (Guest Faculty)

Prof.. K. Rajan, Pondichery University (Guest Faculty)

Prof. Y, Subbaraylu, French Institute of Pondichery (Guest Faculty)

Dr. N.Sam (Guest Faculty)

Course Schedule

The course is planned to be commenced on the 2 May 2016. The course involves 20 lecture sessions and Five days' field training. The classes and training will be completed in Crash mode in the Month of May itself. The detailed schedule will be available on the day of commencement of the course.

There will be a written Examination at the end of the Course, Certificates will be issued by the College

Course fee:

The course fee is Rs. 7500.00.

Contacts:

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