

A Script from India

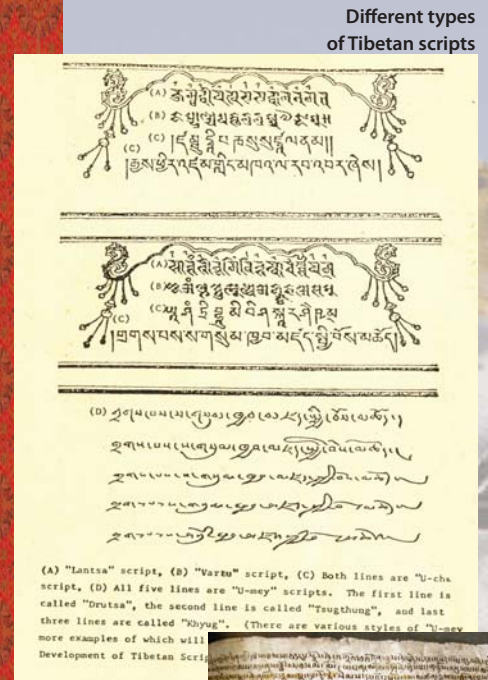
The Translation Can Start



Thomi Sambhota



King Songtsen Gampo



Different types of Tibetan scripts

(A) "Lantsa" script, (B) "Varnu" script, (C) Both lines are "U-cha" script. (D) All five lines are "U-ney" scripts. The first line is called "Drotsa", the second line is called "Tangthung", and last three lines are called "Khyug". (There are various styles of "U-ney" Development of Tibetan Script)



Ancient Denlung Scripts



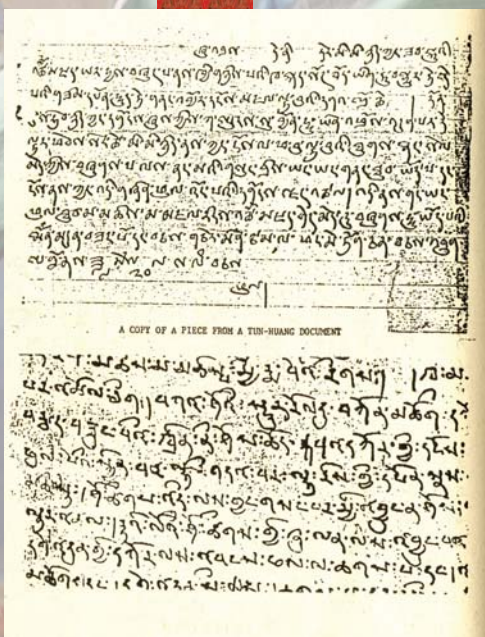
Ancient Sanskrit manuscript found in Tibet

One of the greatest merits of King Songtsen Gampo was to have sent his Minister Thomi Sambhota with sixteen students to India to study Buddhism, Sanskrit and the Art of writing. On his return to Tibet, a Tibetan script, deriving from the Gupta alphabet was created. This script is still in use today. The translation of the first Buddhist scriptures could start.

Some Bon scholars believed that a Zhangzhung script predated the present Tibetan script. But no archeological evidence (on pillar, rock, etc) has been found so far.



Old manuscripts in library in Tibet



Tibetan scripts on a Dunhuang manuscript

| KEY | NORTH INDIA | E. TURKISTAN | TIBET |
|-----|-------------|--------------|-------|
| | ASOKAN | KUSHANA | GUPTA |
| | Indic | Indic | Indic |
| A | 𑀅 | 𑀅 | 𑀅 |
| I | 𑀇 | 𑀇 | 𑀇 |
| U | 𑀆 | 𑀆 | 𑀆 |
| E | 𑀉 | 𑀉 | 𑀉 |
| O | 𑀈 | 𑀈 | 𑀈 |
| KA | 𑀅𑀭 | 𑀅𑀭 | 𑀅𑀭 |
| KHA | 𑀅𑀮 | 𑀅𑀮 | 𑀅𑀮 |
| GA | 𑀆𑀭 | 𑀆𑀭 | 𑀆𑀭 |
| GHA | 𑀆𑀮 | 𑀆𑀮 | 𑀆𑀮 |
| CA | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 |
| CHA | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 |
| JA | 𑀉𑀭 | 𑀉𑀭 | 𑀉𑀭 |
| JHA | 𑀉𑀮 | 𑀉𑀮 | 𑀉𑀮 |
| TA | 𑀈𑀭 | 𑀈𑀭 | 𑀈𑀭 |
| THA | 𑀈𑀮 | 𑀈𑀮 | 𑀈𑀮 |
| DA | 𑀆𑀭 | 𑀆𑀭 | 𑀆𑀭 |
| DHA | 𑀆𑀮 | 𑀆𑀮 | 𑀆𑀮 |
| PA | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 |
| PHA | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 |
| MA | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 |
| MA | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 |
| VA | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 |
| VA | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 |
| SHA | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 |
| SHA | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 |
| SA | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 |
| SA | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 |
| HA | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 | 𑀇𑀭 |
| HA | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 | 𑀇𑀮 |

Chart prepared by the National Museum, New Delhi