



A Philological Study of Some Pyu Words through Inscriptions

Swe Swe Mon

MA Buddhist Studies, International Buddhist College

Email: swemon2006@gmail.com



Abstract

Regardless of disputes and different opinions of archeologists on historical data of Pyu people and their kingdoms, this paper aims to do philological study of some Pyu's words through its inscriptions. Firstly some Pyu inscriptions will be generally studied to shed light on the Theravāda influence in Pyu Period. Pyu language based on *Pāli* and Sanskrit thus it performs as a bridge between *Pāli*, Sanskrit and Myanmar languages to some extent. Though it is based on *Pāli* and Sanskrit, it does not use the words directly from those languages. Therefore, it can be regarded that Pyu language is the evolution from *Pāli* and Sanskrit. In evolution process, words may either slightly or totally change. In this work, the subtle Pyu's words of consecrated Queen, water, Buddha, well-done/let the goodness be and slave will be philologically studied to prove that they are derived from *Pāli* language.

Keywords: Pyu, Inscriptions, Consecrated Queen, Water, Pagoda.

Introduction

As *Kaccāyana Thera's* saying goes, “*attho akkharasaññāto*”.¹ The meaning of all words can be understood only by means of letters. Verily, in case of corrupt letters, the correct meanings of words are difficult to know. With this reason, having the skilled knowledge of letters is of much benefit in the study of texts, scriptures, manuscripts and inscriptions. Moreover, it is the considerable purpose for linguists, archeologists and historians especially to trace the context of ancient civilizations. Thus, it is true that appearance and invention of letters (*akkharā*) is pivotal role for the development of culture and literature of a nation. The standard of culture is dependent on the plane of literature and they are directly well-proportioned. Literature begins with and based on letters. Along with the advancement of mankind, the system of letters is improved throughout the ages. Modern letters has been changed in stages from ancient letters so they can be regarded as grandchildren of ancient letters.

Likewise, Pyu language which is based on *Pāli* and Sanskrit is assumed as the father of Myanmar language according to some archeologists and linguists whilst some assume either Mon or Rakhine languages. From the study of Pyu inscriptions, there are evidences to prove that Pyu is a father language of Myanmar and its performance as a bridge between *Pāli*, Sanskrit and Myanmar language.

This attempts had been made to do a philological study of some subtle Pyu words named consecrated queen, water, pagoda, well-done/let the goodness be and slave found in Pyu inscriptions. Not only it will shed a light the relationship between Pyu, *Pāli*, Sanskrit and Myanmar languages but also aim to reveal the standard of ancient Pyu literature and culture. Through studying these Pyu words, we can also feel and see the flourishing of Theravada Buddhism in the time of Pyu civilization. It is because that history will offer the answer to the question of when and how Buddhism came to Myanmar which history tries to answer.

The Background of Pyu

Pyu is believed to be the mixture of three groups; (1) few insignificant local inhabitants since Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age, (2) many migrants came from India bringing

¹Thera Kaccāyana, **Kaccāyana Byākaraṇa**; (Yangon: Thabyay Pīṭaka Book Shop, Myanmar, 1984), p. 1.

in Hinduism and Buddhism along with their cultures and literatures successively, (3) and the last group believed to have come down from north, Tibeto-Burman group. At present, Pyu is used to designate groups of Tibeto-Burma peoples, migrating from northern plains to the valleys of Upper Myanmar during the first millennium AD. Though there is no record by Pyu people, Chinese accounts mention a Tibeto-Burman speaking people called the P'iao living beyond the frontier. The meaning given to the word P'iao varied over time, from 'rebel' in early Tsin Dynasty texts to 'cavalry' in later Tang ones. Pyu people are thought, however, to have referred to themselves as Tircul with P'iao transcribed as Pyu.²

The Pyu civilization is regarded as the starting point of nowadays Myanmar and Pyu period brought major transitions to ritual as Hindu and Buddhist practice was integrated into an increasing hierarchical society. It is considered that they lived in the whole of upper Myanmar by establishing separate cities.³ Amongst Pyu cities, Beikthano, Hanlin and Sriksetra are eminent for objects found from the walled sites of these cities. Archeology Department of Myanmar claimed the period of these three cities as (1) Beikthano (AD 1- 4), Hanlin (AD 3-9), Sriksetra (AD 4/5 – 9). Except some portions, it is not easy to grasp the whole picture of art, literature, beliefs, life of society and culture of Pyu by studying the objects such as pagodas, stupas, sculptures, gold plates, stone inscriptions, coins, polished stone beads, urns, pots, fraction of iron implements, glass, votive tablets, etc., found in the Pyu walled sites.

The Pyu sites have been dated to about 200 BC – 900 AD, with charcoal samples from Beikthano yielding the earliest dates.⁴ There is palaeographic analysis of a limited number of inscriptions on stone and on gold plates and stylistic analysis of bricks, beads, pottery, sculpture, monuments and walls. However, many aspects of related to the Pyu remain uncertain. So, regardless of disputes and different opinions of archeologists on historical data and information about Pyu we will start to see and analyze the concrete objects found in there.

I. Theravāda Buddhism and Pyu

Regarding with the arrival of *Theravāda* Buddhism to Myanmar, historians try to discover the date. In past, they accepted the time of King *Anuruddhā* of Pagan period (11th

²U Aung Thwin, **Ancient Myanmar Cities**, (Yangon: 2005), p. 14.

³Maung Htin Aung, *A History of Burma*, (USA: 1967), p.5-29.

⁴U Aung Thaw, **Report on the Excavations at Beikthano**, (Yangon: Government of the Union of Burma, Yangon, 1968), p. 48.

century AD) as the first arrival of *Theravāda* Buddhism. But now, according to the data found in excavation of ancient Pyu cites, archaeologists agree the fact that *Theravāda* Buddhism had introduced before Pagan period. Pagan has already been a *Theravāda* Buddhist kingdom before introduction of *Theravāda* Buddhism by Ashin Araham from Thathon kingdom.⁵ After the fall of Sriksetra, the Pyu brought not only the *Theravāda* Buddhism but also their culture and civilization to Pagan. Almost all the *Theravāda* Buddhist rites, ceremonies and festivals and observances of Pagan kingdom came from Pyu kingdom. The Buddhist architecture of Pagan was conceived at Pyu Kingdom and improved on in Pagan.

The introduction of Buddhism to early Pyu kingdoms is believed to date from the time of King Dwattabaung during the third century BC. This may be regarded as the official introduction of Buddhism to Pyu kingdoms. But, for having close proximity to India for trade affairs and historical relations, it is not possible to believe that the most prominent Buddhism of India had not reached to Pyu kingdoms earlier. Chinese historical sources recorded surely the two trade routes, sea and island routes where have existed between Pyu kingdoms and India because China had a contact trading with India through Pyu Kingdoms in about 200 BC. Herein, information based on the study of Pyu inscriptions will be analyzed.

(1) Inscription found at the southern mound of ancient Hanlin (circa AD 4-5)

Most of the inscriptions found in Pyu cites are the record of their merits. This inscription is a record of an ordination of a Pyu prince. This inscription is translated as follow.

*“Be protected, be successful! He was treated badly in the womb (He suffered in the womb). The moon appeared and like a horse it ran. Due to greediness, (men ran in the cycle of life) (Like a horse, the moon appeared and ran. In the same way, due to craving men ran in the cycle of life). Vin Venaw Siri Kada benefitted Great Queen Siri Za Tra Zain and their son He listend the Dhamma and realized that the Dhamma. He cleared all hairs and shaved his hair. He ordained. He was sheltered by Dhamma umbrella.”*⁶

⁵Regarding with the fact that the King *Anuruddhā* s march to Mon Kingdom to take *Tipiṭaka*, some historians still do not agree.

⁶U Aung Thein, **Pyu and Pyu Stone Inscriptions or Buddhism in Pyu**, (Yangon: 2005), p. 18-19.

According to Chinese records, Pyu children were shaved their heads and sent to monasteries from the age of seven until at the age of twenty. When they reached at age of twenty, they were free to choose whether to process higher ordination or to go back home. From this point, we can see their faith in Buddhism. Not only *Theravāda* but *Mahāyāna* and *Brahmana Vāda* also had prevailed in Pyu period.

(2) Inscriptions in Two Gold Plates found at Maung Kan Village, Sriksetra

In ancient Sriksetra, Pyu inscriptions are found more than Hanlin. At the time of Sriksetra, Pyu language were inscribed mostly in gold plates, statues, terracotta tablets, burial urns in stone and stone tablets. The greatest Pyu monuments in Sriksetra are the three lofty stupas – the Bawbawgyi, Payagyi and Payama. In 1897, Dr. Emil Forch Hammer found the two gold plates at Maung Kan village, near Srikesetra. Each gold plate has three lines of *Pāli* stanza and assuming that they used the southern India letters. The first gold plate mentioned –

1. *Ye-dhammā-hetuppabhavā tesam-hetum tathāgato āha tesañcha yo nirodho evaṃ vādi mahāsamaṇoti. Chattāyo iddhipādā*
2. *Chattāro samappdhānā chattāro-satipatthānā chattāri ariya saccāni catuvethārijjāni pañcacakkhuni cha.*
3. *Asaddharaṇāni sattabojjhangā ariyo-atthingiko maggonavalokuttarā dhamma dasabalāni suddasa buddhakoni atthārasa buddhadhammāni.⁷*

The second gold plate mentioned –

1. *Ye-dhammā-hetuppabhavā tesam-hetum tathāgato āha tesañcha yo nirodho evaṃ vādi mahāsamaṇoti. Itipisobhagavā araham.*
2. *Sammā-sambuddho vijjāsaraṇa saṃpanno sugato lokavidhū anuttaropurisa dhammasārathi sattādeva manussānaṃ buddho bhagavāti.*
3. *Svakkhāto bhagavatādhammo saṅditthiko akāliko ehipassiko opanayiko paccattam veditabbo viññuhiti.⁸*

⁷U Thar Myat, **Pyu reader: A History of Pyu Alphabet**, (Yangon: The Natinal Printing Works, Myanmar, 1963), p.44.

⁸U Thar Myat, **Pyu reader: A History of Pyu Alphabet**, (Yangon: The Natinal Printing Works, Myanmar, 1963), p.45.

They are started with the famous *Yedhammā gātha* from *Mahāvagga Pāli* and followed by *Buddhavacana* from *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, *Udāna Pāli* from *Kuddhaka Nikāya* and *Vibhaṅga Pāli* from *Abhidhammā Piṭaka*.

(3) Inscription in a Gold Plate found at Kyun Daw Su Village , Sriksetra (circa AD 5-6)

The fragments of this gold plate were found in 1928-1929 excavation at Kyun Daw Su village, Sriksetra. The nine attributes of the Buddha was inscribed in it as follow -

“*itipisobhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjāsaraṇasaṃpanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisa (damma sarathi satthā)deva manussānaṃ buddhobhagavā.*”⁹

(4) Inscriptions in Twenty Gold Plates found in the Relic chamber of Khin Ba Mound, Sriksetra (circa AD 4-5)

In 1926 last, Mr. Duroiselle and his group found twenty leaves of gold manuscripts in the relic chamber of Khin Ba mound. Each inscribed on one side only, placed within two cover made of gold. These gold plates manuscripts are regarded as the earliest one written in *Pāli*. They have similar style of *Telugu-kanaṭi* script.¹⁰ Like the Maung Kan Gold plates, the first eighteen leaves of the manuscripts contains three lines, the nineteenth has four lines and the last twentieth has only two.

All these manuscripts mentioned the text from the *Tipiṭaka*. They can be grouped into nine as follow.

- (1) The first fourteen lines (gold plate no. 1 – 5 (not include the last line from no.5)) are *Paṭiccasamuppāda desanā*.
- (2) The last line of gold plate no.5 is “*udayavaya bangabaya adinnava nibbida munjana upekkha*” which is from *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha Pāli*.
- (3) The first two lines of gold plate no. 6 is *Buddhavacana* that can be found in *Dīgha*, *Majjhima*, *Aṅguttara* and *Udāna Pāli*.
- (4) From the last line of gold plate no.6 up to the second line of gold plate no. 12 is the *Sīhanāda sutta Pāli* from *Mūlapaṇṇāsa* of *Majjhima Nikāya* and *Catuttha*

⁹Ibid. p. 40.

¹⁰U Sein Win, **Pyu Culture and Evidences**, (Yangon: 1996), p. 56.

Nipāta Pāḷi of Aṅguttara Nikāya.

- (5) From the last line of gold plate no. 12 up to the gold plate no. 17 is from *Paṭisambhidāmagga* of *Kuddaka Nikāya*.
- (6) The first line “*maggana thingiko settho saccanam caturo pada viragoes*” and the first half of the second line “*thodhammanam dipadanam ca cakkhumati*” of gold plate no. 18 can be found in the *Dhammapada*.
- (7) The last words “*siddhadanto danteti*” of the second line of gold plate no. 18 up to the third line and the word ‘*gava*’ from the fourth line of gold plate no. 19 are from *Mahāvagga* of *Vinaya Piṭaka*.
- (8) The fourth line of a gold plate no. 19 “*yo viyo sabbavidanto, suddho appati pug-galo, araham sugato loke, tassaham paricarakoti*” is a *gatha* from *mahavagga Pāḷi* of *Vinaya Piṭaka*.
- (9) Gold plate no. 20 is about the nine attributes of the Buddha.

(5) Terracotta tablet founded at Pyokhingyi mound, Sriksetra (circa AD 6-7)

This terracotta is believed to be written with a Gupta script bearing effigies of the Buddha on the obverse. The reverse of some of these contains short extracts from the *Abhidhamma*. It is -

*“kusala (dhamma aku)
Sala dhamma avyaka (ta)
Dhamma. bā: dehi”¹¹*

The last words “*bā: dehi*” are Pyu language.

(6) Terracotta Votive tablet from the Relic chamber of Shwesandaw Pagoda, Pagan

It was written in Pyu language though it had dated Pagan Era. With this point, we can know the presence and still use of Pyu language in the time of Pagan. The translation is -

¹¹U Thar Myat, **Pyu reader: A History of Pyu Alphabet**, (Yangon: The Natinal Printing Works, Myanmar, 1963), p.38.

“By donating (terracotta tablet containing mould of) that noble Buddha by me. May noble lord Buddha Arimeitaya say these words of praise. “You, headman of villages, Sri Banyanaw attain omniscience and reach the country of Nibbana where no one can die.” All of you may say “Well-done, well-done.”¹²

From these inscriptions, we can see that Pyu people had great contact in *Theravāda* Buddhist texts since AD 4-5 and also can know the influence of it on Pyu people and in their life. Besides, many of the Buddhist reliefs found in Sriksetra present inscriptions in Pyu language. Amongst the archaeological finds, the numerous votive tables found testify to the strong activity of Buddhist worshippers in Pyu society. When the Sriksetra was destroyed, it is believed that Pyu people brought the *Theravāda* tradition with them to Pagan. Therefore, the beginning of *Theravāda* Buddhism in Myanmar is not from the Pagan period but since from the time of Pyu. Moreover, the strong presence of Buddhist images and monuments confirms the spread of Buddhism in Myanmar even before the rise of Pagan.

II. The Language of Pyu

The Pyu script was used mostly for religious and royal purposes and it is noted for archaism over a 700 year time span. *Brahmi* letters gave birth Southern India letters and Northern India letters. Amongst the Southern India letters, *Telugu-kanāḍi* has a close relationship with Myanmar letters. From *Telugu-kanāḍi* letters, *Kadamba* and *Pallava* letters are appeared. It is believed that from *Kadamba* letters, Pyu letters are created and used as their own style. Thus, it is a sophisticated *Brahmi*-derived language and it is not yet totally translated. The Pyu letters are researched and revealed firstly by Dr. Charles Otto Blagden. Pyu language becomes as a dead language nowadays.

Inflectional languages, like *Pāḷi* and Sanskrit, are languages in which a word is composed of a root and inflectional morphemes, which fuse into one another. The inflectional morphemes signify the number, gender, person and case of nouns and tense or aspect of verbs. In Sanskrit, the stem ‘deva’ (god) changes into *devas*, *devam*, *devasya*, and *deva* in nominative, accusative, genitive and locative, respectively. Languages in India are mostly inflectional languages. Japanese, Korean, Burmese and most languages in India as Hindi, *Telegu* and Tamil are SOV (Subject, Object, Verb) languages, according to their ways of word order. Thus, as a *Brahmi*-derived language, Pyu language is also SOV language.

¹²U Aung Thein, **Pyu and Pyu Stone Inscriptions or Buddhism in Pyu**, (Yangon: 2005), p. 52.

Most of the scholars assume that 12th century AD is the beginning of Myanmar language and the end of Pyu language.¹³ Pyu language is based on *Pāli* and Sanskrit because they are in the same language group. Thus it performs as a bridge between *Pāli*, Sanskrit languages and Myanmar language to the some extent. Though it is based on *Pāli* and Sanskrit, it does not use the words directly from those languages. Expectation is they used the texts of *Pāli* and Sanskrit without changing. So, we can see the original *Pāli* verse of *Tipiṭaka* in the inscriptions. Therefore, it is said that Pyu language is the evolution from *Pāli* and Sanskrit. In evolution process, there are slightly changes and hugely changes of words.

In ancient Hanlin, archeologists do not have much evidences regarding with Pyu language except one gravestone inscription and one stone inscription which are supposed to be written between 4 AD and 5 AD. According to the study of Pyu words from gravestone inscriptions, Pyu language has eight kinds of tones and it is not ended with vowel.¹⁴

The gravestone inscription of Hanlin with two types of letter is believed to be the earliest one (see figure- 10). The original two sentences and the extra sentences were not written in same letters. They are different. It is believe that the original two sentences were written with letters of six century AD while letters of extra sentences were earlier than six century AD. According to some scholars, letters of extra sentences were the same as *Brahmi* letters used during the third BC and the second AD in India. It is maintained in the museum of Pagan.

In this inscription, the word “*daviṃ*” which means the King of Devas is the combination of ‘*deva*’ and ‘*inda*’. The previous ‘*a*’ vowel, is dropped because of the following vowel ‘*i*’. The word becomes as ‘*devinda*’ Then, the last consonant ‘*da*’ is dropped according to the nature of Pyu language and we get ‘*devin*’. ‘*e*’ of ‘*devin*’ is changed into ‘*a*’ and ‘*n*’ is changed into ‘*niggaḥita ṃ*’. Finally, the word ‘*daviṃ*’ is formed. (*deva + inda > devinda > devin > daviṃ*). Likewise, there are similar words such as “*jiṃ*”, “*kviṃ*” and “*tiṃ*” In it, we can see the slightly changes of words and the usage of euphony.

¹³U Khin Maung Than, **Pyu Abhidhan**, (Sagaing: The Department of Research, Sitagu Buddhist University, Myanmar, 2013), p. 12.

¹⁴Dr. Than Tun, **The Story of Burma told in Pictures**, (Yangon: Guardian Sunday Supplement, Vols. 8-9, First Anniversary Commemoration).

(1) Consecrated Queen – Uvo:

In the history, Myanmar Kings celebrated different kinds of consecration ceremonies. There are fourteen kinds of consecration ceremonies in general. Consecration ceremony for occupying kingship, giving title as a queen, getting victories in wars and getting the white elephants are the most popular ones. In the time of Sriksetra, consecration ceremony for giving title as a queen can be found through the word “*uvo:*” inscribed in a burial stone-urn of the queen of King *Suriya Vikiyama*.¹⁵ In the *Rājakumāra* inscription of Pagan, the word “*uvomaya:* (consecrated queen)” can be found. The word “*maya:*” in “*uvomaya:*” means “wife” in Pyu language. But when it is combined with ‘*uvo:*’, it means ‘queen’. “*ya*” becomes “long” as “*yā*”. Then, it becomes as ‘*mayā:*’ means ‘wife in Myanmar.

It can suggested that the word “*uvo:*” is derived from the *Pāli* word “*abhiseka*” which means “consecration; ablution; sprinkling.” The nature of Pyu language is cut of the last or first *Pāli* word if it is seen long and difficult to pronounce. So, ‘*seka*’ of ‘*abhiseka*’ is dropped. ‘*abhi*’ changed into ‘*uvo:*’ (*a>u*) (*b>v*) (*hi>ih>o:*). It can suggested with another way that the word “*uvo:*” is from the *Pali* word “*avasitta*” which means “be sprinkled, anointed, consecrated” (eg. *rājā khattiyo muddhāvasitto* - of a properly consecrated king). The nature of Pyu language is cut of the last *Pāli* word if it is seen long and difficult to pronounce. So, ‘*sitta*’ of ‘*avasitta*’ is dropped. ‘*ava*’ is changed into ‘*uvo:*’ (*a>u*) (*va>vo:*).

The *Pāli* word ‘*abhiseka*’ is changed into ‘*bhisik*’ as Myanmar language. ‘*abhi*’ of ‘*a*’ is dropped. The last vowel ‘*a*’ is dropped because it is rare to see the word ending with vowel in Myanmar language. ‘*e*’ of ‘*seka*’ is changed into ‘*i*’. In this way, the word ‘*bhisik*’ is used in Myanmar language.

(2) Water – Tdu

The Pyu word ‘*tdu*’ which means ‘water’ can be found in the inscription of *Rājakumāra* in the phrase of ‘in pouring water’.¹⁶ There are synonyms of the word ‘water’ in Pali such as *jala*; *udaka*; *vāri*; *ambu*; *pānīya*; *salila*; *nīra*; *toya*, etc. In Sanskrit, there are about twenty-seven synonyms of it. But the Pyu word “*Tdū*” cannot be found from the single synonym word of water, according to U Aung Thein.¹⁷ He said that it is formed by

¹⁵U Aung Thein, **Pyu and Pyu Stone Inscriptions or Buddhism in Pyu**, (Yangon: 2005), p. 85.

¹⁶U Thar Myat, **Pyu reader: A History of Pyu Alphabet**, (Yangon: 1963), p.76.

¹⁷U Aung Thein, **Pyu and Pyu Stone Inscriptions or Buddhism in Pyu**, (Yangon: 2005), p. 83

the combination of “*toya*” and “*udaka*”. ‘*ya*’ of ‘*toya*’, ‘*u*’ and ‘*ka*’ of ‘*udaka*’ are dropped. The word ‘*toda*’ is left. ‘*o*’ is dropped again and ‘*a*’ is changed into ‘*u*’. Then, the word ‘*tdu*’ is formed. (*toya + udaka > toda > tda > tdu*)

Otherwise, it can be derived only from ‘*udaka*’. ‘*u*’ is dropped. ‘*a*’ in ‘*da*’ is dropped. ‘*dka*’ is left. The last vowel ‘*a*’ is changed into ‘*o*’ and ‘*k*’ is changed into ‘*t*’ for in the same vagma group. We got ‘*dtu*’. According to metathesis, ‘*d*’ and ‘*t*’ change the place. It becomes as ‘*tdu*’.

Another instance of the combination of two Pāli words formed a Pyu word is “*timprī:*” which has the meaning of ‘country’. It is the combination of ‘*raṭṭha*’ and ‘*pura*’. ‘*ra*’ of ‘*raṭṭha*’ is dropped and ‘*-ṭṭha*’ is changed into ‘*ta*’. Again, ‘*ta*’ is changed into ‘*tim*’. ‘*u*’ of ‘*pura*’ is dropped and ‘*pra*’ becomes ‘*prī:*’. Then, the Pyu word ‘*timprī:*’ is formed. the Pyu word ‘*timprī:*’ is changed as ‘*taipri*’ in Myanmar Language.

(3) Well-done/ Let the goodness be – Hapracho:

When the merit is done, Buddhist people used to say “well-done, well-done, well-done”. As most of the ancient inscriptions are record of merits, the use of ‘well-done’ can be found frequently. In Pyu inscriptions, ‘well-done’ is inscribed as ‘*hapraso*’ or ‘*sadhū*’.

And it also brings the meaning as ‘let the goodness be’. In this sense, ‘*hapraso*’ is the combination of three words, ‘*ha*’ + ‘*pra*’ + ‘*so*’. ‘*ha*’ means ‘good’ and it is derived from *upassāra pada* ‘*su*’ of Pāli. ‘*pra*’ seems to be Mon word. In Mon inscription, we can see the phrase “*pasādhukar*”. In it ‘*pa*’ is translated as ‘do’ or ‘make’. Thus, ‘*pr*’ of ‘*pra*’ become ‘*pp*’ and one ‘*p*’ is dropped. It becomes as ‘*pa*’ means ‘do’. In another way, we can think it comes from the Pāli root √*kar*. ‘*k*’ is changed into ‘*p*’ and ‘*par*’ becomes ‘*pra*’.

The word ‘*so*’ means ‘be’. It has the same meaning with Myanmar language ‘*tho*’. It is probably came from Pāli word of ‘*hoti*’. ‘*ti*’ is dropped and ‘*h*’ is changed into ‘*s*’ (*h > s*, they are interchangeable).

(4) Buddha – Hra

In the *Rājakumāra* inscription, the golden Buddha was written as “*hratha*” in Pyu Language. ‘*hra*’ is the Buddha and ‘*tha*’ means ‘gold’. There are many words used to refer the Buddha such as “*tathāgata*”, “*bhagavā*”, “*sammāsambuddha*”, etc., in praising of the Buddha’s attributes. Akin to it, the word ‘*hra*’ may come from ‘*araham*’, the first attribute of the Buddha. ‘*a*’ and ‘*m*’ are dropped and ‘*raha*’ is left. ‘*a*’ of ‘*ra*’ is dropped and ‘*rha*’ is changed into ‘*hra*’, according to metathesis.

(5) Slave – Tra:

Although slavery is no longer legal anywhere in the world, it is illegally still keeping on under the name of human trafficking. We cannot know the exact date to discovery the beginning of the slavery, yet, we can see the existence of slavery in ancient time from historical records. In ancient Myanmar also had a system of slavery. There are texts explaining the different types of slaves. The children born from slaves were also included in the list of slaves. In Pagan Era, pagoda-slaves were well-know. After a pagoda was built, a group of slaves were donated to that pagoda take care and maintain the pagoda.

Even nowadays, the generations of pagoda-slaves can be seen in Pagan. Bound by the sense of duty and the deeply held Buddhist belief in Kamma, they have served as the custodians of pagodas. The evidence of slaves in Pagon period can be found in the *Rājakumāra* inscription through the word “‘tra:’”. The Prince *Rājakumāra* donated three villages of slaves to the pagoda. Before that time, slavery reached to the land of ancient Myanamr in no doubt.

In Pyu, slave is known as ‘tra:’ while Mon used ‘dik’ for the word ‘slave’. The word ‘tra:’ is come from the Sanskrit word ‘dāsya’. ‘da’ is dropped and ‘sya’ becomes ‘sra’, ‘y’ and ‘r’ are interchangeable. And ‘s’ is changed into ‘t’. Finally, the word ‘tra:’ is formed.

Conclusion

To sum up present knowledge, in Pyu inscriptions three types of languages are found generally, namely, *Pāli*, Sanskrit and Pyu. For instance, twenty gold plates from Khin Ba mound were written in *Pāli* language. The inscription of a seated Buddha statue was written in the mixture of *Pāli* and Sanskrit. The gravestone inscription of Hanlin was in Pyu language. According to the regions and Era, the style of writing was changed so that we can mostly see different scripts of Southern India which are branches of the *Brahmi* letters while very rare to see of Northern Indian scripts.

History, language, and literature are inseparable. Undoubtedly, historian represents the past via language and employs literature as historical evidence. Yes, it is true. Thus, this study hopes to confirm the high degree of literature via language achieved by the Pyu culture and the key role of the Pyu cities in the network of the first urban societies of Southeast Asia. A great quantity of diverse structures has been excavated at only in Sriksetra. In total, 105 monuments have been located inside the walls and 172 outside them, conveying something of the archaeological complexity and riches of the vast site. Undoubtedly, more

remains to be discovered there and at other Pyu centres- discoveries that may well change the views presented here and have implications for our understanding of early urbanization and cultural expression.

References

- Ancient Myanmar Inscriptions. Vol I, II, III.* Yangon: The Government of Burma, 1972.
- Aung Thaw, U, *Ancient Myanmar Cities.* Yangon: 1993.
- Aung Thein, U, *Pyu and Pyu Stone Inscriptions or Buddhism in Pyu.* Yangon: 2005.
- Htin Aung, Maung, *A History of Burma.* USA: 1967.
- Khin Maung Than, U, *Pyu Abhidham.* Yangon: 2013.
- Marshall, John, ed. *Archeological Survery of India, Annual Report 1911-1912.* India: 1915.
- Moore, Elizabeth Howard, *The Pyu Landscape: Collect Articles.* Myanmar: Myanmar Archeological Publication Series, 2012.
- Pho Latt, U, *Chronicle of Myanmar and Research on its Culture.* Yangon: 1962.
- Sein Win, U, *Pyu Culture and Evidences.* Yangon: The Ministry of Cultural, 1996.
- Thar Myat, U, *Pyu Reader: A History of Pyu Alphabet.* Yangon: 1963.