



# The Cataloguing of Manuscripts: A Contextual Study

## मातृकासूची-सूचीगतग्रन्थविषयवर्गीकरणम्

**Dr. Vinayak Namannavar**

Assistant Professor,  
Dept of Manuscriptology  
& Director (Ex), ASR Melukote  
Karnataka Sanskrit University  
Bangalore-18

### Introduction:

The systematic arrangement of manuscripts in a repository is called cataloguing<sup>1</sup>. It is the primary stage of research in manuscript studies. It is interesting to note that custodians of manuscripts repositories often adopt their own unique system unlike a book library, the manuscripts can be arranged in alphabetical order according to the subject, title, author, place, language and script. The *Anukramanīkās* (indices) and *Nighantūs* (etymology) give some idea of indexing and classifications. The *Kośas* (Metrical Dictionaries) have a system of classification of words in alphabetical order. The anthologies in Sanskrit literature provide different methods of subject wise classification. The catalogues can be provided to the scholars in printed form and / or in electronic format.

### Characteristics of a Standard Catalogue:

The cataloguer must write the information in Roman script with diacritical marks or in the original script like Devanagari, including regional languages. It should be written in *Prātipadika* (*mūla*) or without *vibhakti* in the standardized catalogue format for greater comprehension i.e., '*Gitagovinda*' not *Gitagovindah* or *Gitagovindam* or *Gitagovindamu* or *Gitagovind* etc. If any variation comes in regional or national languages, the remarks field should be used. The regional variations of pronunciation and writing of letters such as *ba/va*, *śha/sa*, *ta/tha* etc. should be avoided. The National Mission for Manuscripts has standardized the cataloguing format of fields and subjects, diacritical marks in Roman, Arabic/Persian scripts and developed the National Electronic Catalogue of Manuscripts.

### Date of creation of manuscript by the scribe/writer:

It must be distinguished from the date of authorship of the text itself. Here, date refers to when a particular manuscript was put to writing. It may be available in the post colophon (*uttara puṣhpika*), although it may also appear in the beginning of the manuscript. The date may appear in several ways – sometimes in Arabic numerals and sometimes through symbols of deities or nature such as, *Indu - 1*, *Yama - 2*, *Bhuvana - 3*, *Veda - 4*, *Baṇa - 5*, etc. and counted from right to left side for decoding the date.

If the date is not found, 'Not available' must be written. Sometimes you may have to derive the date of a text on the basis of comparisons with other versions of the text or carefully studying the script or dating of the material on which it is written. The *Amarakośa* and other *kośas* are helpful to decode the date of manuscripts. In many south Indian manuscripts, date is decoded by *Kaṭapayadi* system like, *kādinava*, *Tādinava*, *Pādipancha* and *Yādyashta*.

## Types of catalogues<sup>2</sup>:

### 1. Systematic bibliography (व्यवस्थात्मकग्रन्थसूची)

This can be region specific, kingdom/king specific, time specific or subject specific like पद्य, गद्य, साहित्य, नाटकइतरा: or it can be specific to particular author like 'कालिदास:विरचित' etc. e.g., "Catalogue of books" printed in 15 CE and presently found in British museum. Dictionary of quotations also comes under this category.

### 2. Analytical or Critical bibliography (विश्लेषणात्मकअथवाविमर्शात्मकग्रन्थसूची)

#### a. Descriptive bibliography<sup>3</sup>(विवर्णात्मकग्रन्थसूची)

#### b. Textual bibliography<sup>4</sup>(पाठनिर्णयात्मकग्रन्थसूची)

Textual bibliography is similar to that of critical bibliography. Textual bibliographer must have a thorough knowledge of literature that are available in different forms as original text, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, re-edition etc. then the textual bibliography decides the differences occurred among them. Therefore, the textual bibliographer must have knowledge of critical bibliography preparation. So, critical bibliographer without the knowledge of literature, classification of language and its ancestral qualities he will not be able to decide the text.

### 3. Subject bibliography (निर्दिष्टग्रन्थसूची)

As the name suggests, it is specific to subject in theme. An example to this is being "Author" specific. It can specify authors other works, commentaries on works, other authors टीका, othe books of author, secondary materials relating to author, audio/video related, प्रकटित/अप्रकटितलेखका:, भाषान्तराणि, etc. It gives an impression of विवर्णात्मकग्रन्थसूचिbut, it is not so.

### 4. National Catalogue(राष्ट्रीयग्रन्थसूची)

All books and manuscripts are made four copies and sent to each regional repositories [regional deposit repository]. This is as per Indian law that every manuscript published in the county has to be made into four copies with original kept in *Raṣṭreeya granthālaya* located in Kolkata. Every three months once and yearly once the published works are compiled for public reading under the name Government publication. The publication carries the Regional Index No, Language, Details of subject, Writer and Language written in English

### 5. Historical bibliography<sup>5</sup>(चारित्रिकग्रन्थसूची)

Card index:Generally, custodians use cards indices and the minimum fields required for standard card indexing are:

- |                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Title                     | 7. Substance      |
| 2. Author                    | 8. Status         |
| 3. Collection of manuscripts | 9. Language       |
| 4. Commentary                | 10. Script        |
| 5. Commentator               | 11. No. of folios |
| 6. Condition of manuscript   | 12. Subject       |

## 6. Triennial Catalogue:<sup>6</sup>

A report collected once every three years is a triennial catalogue. For example, the one at Government Oriental Manuscript Library and Research Centre, Chennai.

## 7. Descriptive Catalogue (विवराणात्मकग्रन्थसूची)

A Descriptive Catalogue furnishes such a detailed description of the manuscript. It has three parts – a) Physical Description, b) Catalogue Description, c) Publication. A scholar requires these three parts when he/she takes up any manuscript for research or critical editing, but when a cataloguer prepares the catalogue upon direct consultation with the manuscript, the catalogue description is not necessary. The cataloguer may also give information of copies of a manuscript available in other repositories.

### Physical Description:

1. The name of repository	16. No. of Folios
2. Serial No. or Record No.	17. Missing Folios
3. Title	18. No. of Syllables ( <i>akṣarās</i> )
4. Other Title	19. No. of lines in a page
5. Author	20. No. of letters in a line
6. Joint Author	21. No. of Granthas
7. Commentary	22. Length/Width
8. Scribe	23. Illustrations
9. Scribe & Place	24. Reviser/Translator /Reviser of commentary
10. Script	25. Beginning Line
11. Language	26. Ending Line
12. Status: Complete/Incomplete	27. Colophon
13. Condition of manuscript	28. Post Colophon
14. Subject	29. Contents
15. Material	30. Remarks

### Catalogue Description:

1. Title of the catalogue	6. Volume
2. Cataloguer/Editor	7. Part No.
3. Special Collection	8. Bundle No.
4. Year	9. Manuscript No.
5. Serial No.	10. Library Acc. No.

### Publication Details:

1. Language	2. Publisher
3. Place	4. Year

### Scribe:

This refers to the person who has written the copy of the manuscript. The scribe is usually different from the author; he is the person who copies a particular manuscript. Name of the scribe is usually given in the post colophon *or* *uttara puṣhpika*. The name of scribe/writer, his place, father's name, his genealogy and profession should be mentioned in the format. The scribe just copies the text as he reads or understands from

the copy codex or exemplar. The words like Lekhaka, Pustaka-vāchaka, etc. are used for scribes (types of scribes are Pustaka-lekhaka, Kāyastha-lekhaka and Śhāsana-lekhaka). The scribe advises readers on how to use and handle the codex or manuscript and to protect it from oil, water, mouse, natural disaster, fire, humidity and insects, etc. "Protect me from oil, protect me from water and protect me from loose binding. Please don't handover me to fools says a manuscript"

### Reviser/ Translator:

Revisor is the person who prepares new, edited version of a text Sometimes the reviser reconstructs the text from one language or script to another language or script. Such revision is much often noted in Buddhist and Islamic texts. Translator is the person who translates the language from one to another such as from Tibetan to Sanskrit.

### Subject:

This refers to the topic/theme of the manuscript. Can be expressed in keywords or phrases that describe the content of the manuscript. It might also include classification data, for example, Library of congress classification and decimal numbers etc. For subject headings and sub-headings, Indian terminology of the concerned languages should be used, for instance, *Veda*, *Kāvya*, *Nāṭya*, *Itihāsa*, *Dārśana*, *Tantra*, *Jyotisa*, *Āyurveda* etc. The English terminology can be used along with Indian Terminology such as Vedas>*Rigvedasamhita*> Vedic literature, where 'Veda' is the broad subject category, '*Rigvedasamhita*' is the specific branch of study and 'Vedic literature' is the English equivalent. The classified string of subjects is extremely effective for retrieval purposes. NMM subject list and classifications should be followed in subject classification

### Beginning Line:

The starting lines or some stanzas of the text. It should be written in Roman script with diacritical marks or in Devanagari. The small texts of a *stotra* may be noted. e.g., *Aum namo Ganeśāya*, or any auspicious symbols or any *mangala* sloka of *iśṭadeva*. If the starting portion of first folio is missing, the starting text of the available portion may be noted.

### Ending Line:

The ending lines or stanzas of the text before colophon. It should be written in Roman script with diacritical marks or in Devanagari/Arabic

### Contents:

It is the *anukramaṇika*, the list of chapters and sections of the treatise including key words or phrases that describe the content of the resource. This refers to the declaration of ending the text. Usually contains names of author and scribe, often with a short biographical note informing us about their native place, parentage, name of the guru and so on. Three types of colophons: inter-text colophon, text colophon and post colophon. Inter-text colophon comes in the end of a chapter (*iti prathamō'dhyāya samāptaḥ*), text colophon comes at the end of a text (*iti samāpto'yaṃ granthaḥ*). Generally, the author composes these two colophons and the scribe writes the post colophon (*uttara puspika*). The names of a text and author and date of composition are available in first two colophons and sometimes in the third. The third post colophon is very important for the study of history of a text and manuscript - it describes the composer, scribe, for what purpose he writes, date of writing or copying the manuscript, any praise of patron, dedications to patron, whether writing by order of a king or royal person, handling of manuscript, sometimes conservation and preservation of manuscript, etc. Bundle No./ Manuscript No.

### Bundle No./ Manuscript No.:

A string or number used to uniquely identify the two or more manuscripts/resources bound as one. In one bundle having two or more manuscripts, the bundle name will be same for each manuscript in the bundle but the manuscript numbers will vary. If, for example, bundle no. 1 contains 3 manuscripts, then the manuscript no's will be denoted as 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3. The number of bundle and manuscript should be followed

like 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and not 1.a, 1.b, 1.c. The Bundle No. and Manuscript No. should be identified and separated by dot (.) only, not by any slash (/) or any other divider

### No. of Folios:

Refers to the number of the folios within a manuscript. Blank folios should be included in the tally and noted in Remarks. One folio is counted for both 1a and 1b (obverse and reverse) sides. Number of folios in a manuscript can be different from its pagination. For instance, a manuscript may have folios numbered from 1 to 50 and if folios 4-8 are missing, then the number of folios in the manuscript is 45.

### Size of manuscript:

Height x Width, measured in centimetres

### Material:

Refers to the substance or *ādharapātala* that the manuscript is made of including ivory, palm leaf, birch-bark, wood, gold, silver, paper, tortoise shell, *agaru-bark*, *sanchi-pat*, *tala-pat*, etc.

Refers to pictures or diagrams that may accompany the text. Mention must be made of:

- Total number of illustrations
- Size of each illustration
- Detailed descriptions of illustrations
- If something is drawn on one side of a folio and whether there appears text on the other side.
- If any folio or a part of folio is blank
- If space is left for an illustration on a folio, but it is not filled in
- One must note the border, margins, cover illustrations
- Name of the painter/patron is sometimes found below the illustration

### Status: (Complete / Incomplete)

If the text is complete 'Com' or 'Complete' shall be written. If incomplete fill in 'Inc' or 'Incomplete'. If one chapter of a text in a bundle is complete, it is complete, but write the name of text with chapter in bracket. If some folios are missing in the middle but beginning and ending exist, it is incomplete.

### Missing Portion:

Refers to missing text, if at all. Indicate missing folios, if possible, like this - 1-3, 9-11, 19-23.

### Condition:

Refers to the condition of the manuscript— 'good', 'bad', 'worm infected' 'fungi, and 'stuck folio', 'brittle'; 'illustration/script illegible'.

### Source of Catalogue:

This refers to the source on which the cataloguing is based. Not applicable in case a primary text itself is used.

### Remarks:

- The details of the manuscript, if it is available elsewhere.
- If it is published or unpublished.
- Material of the cover of the manuscript – ivory, skin, wood etc.
- Whether there is anything written accompanying the text like notes
- The cataloguer can use this column for giving extra information
- If a number of grammatical mistakes/errors occur in the text, or the text is error-free, it should be mentioned here.
- The calligraphy, type of ink used in the text, special size or shape of manuscript, if any i.e., *ganḍi*, *kacchapi*, *muṣṣṭi*, *samputāphālaka*, *chedapati*, scroll; the style of writing i.e., *tripatha*, *caturpatha*, *suksmaksari*, *sunda* and ornamentation of the text should be mentioned.

- Details of illustrated manuscripts should be documented – colour, illustrations, style.

## Publication:

Is the text is printed or litho-typed:

- If the text is printed with critical edition or popular edition or vulgate edition or student edition, then refer to the title, editor, translator, language, publisher, place of publication and year of publication.
- The bibliography of the text may be given.

“The search for all information ends in manuscript catalogue” goes a saying, every scholar desire to glance through a catalogue so to keep tab with time. The catalogue has all information from published books to unpublished manuscripts to micro writings to gramophone records to reviews.

## End Notes:

- 1) ग्रन्थसम्पादनशास्त्रम्, एस् जगन्नाथः मैसुरु “पूर्णप्रज्ञसंशोधनमन्दिरम्, बेङ्गळूरु – २८ पृ. सं. १५४ पुस्तकस्य अथवा मातृकायाः अभिलेखस्य सङ्ग्रहीन व्यवस्थितनामपट्टिका ‘ग्रन्थसूची’ ति कथ्यते ।
- 2) व्यवस्थात्मकग्रन्थसूचीषु – सङ्कीर्ण-साहित्य-निर्दिष्ट लेखकस्य अन्यपुस्तकस्य विषयानां विस्तृत – विवरणं अत्रभवन्ति । अत्रप्राधान्येन पञ्चविधग्रन्थसूच्यः उपलभ्यन्ते । 1) सङ्कीर्णग्रन्थसूची 2) साहित्यग्रन्थसूची 3) निर्दिष्टविषयसम्बद्धग्रन्थसूची 4) लेखकग्रन्थसूची 5) अन्यपुस्तक पट्टिका:
- 3) विश्लेषणात्मक ग्रन्थसूचीषु ग्रन्थस्य अथवा मातृकायाः परिमाणम्, स्वरूपम्, व्यक्तिविषयः – च तथा मातृकायाः भौतिक परिचयः भवति । आदर्शप्रतीनां मूलप्रतीनां परिपूर्णप्रतीनां मातृकाणां पुस्तकानां सम्पूर्ण विवरणं तत्र भवति सा एव विमर्शात्मक-ग्रन्थसूची ।
- 4) मातृकानां, पुस्तकानां सम्पूर्ण विवरणं भवन्ति ।
- 5) चारित्रिकसम्बन्धिविषयाणां ग्रन्थानां नामपट्टिका ।
- 6) “ग्रन्थसम्पादनशास्त्रम्” “एस् जगन्नाथ” “पूर्णप्रज्ञसंशोधनमन्दिरम्” बेङ्गळूरु – २८

## REFFRED BOOKS

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