

## **Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 – 4 Marks Questions**

### **Question 13.**

**Critically examine the limitations of the inscriptional evidences in understanding political and economic history of India.**

**Answer:**

Inscriptions are important source to know history. But there are certain limitations of inscriptions. These were:

1. Several thousands of inscriptions were discovered, but not all of them were deciphered or translated.

Generally, inscriptions were composed in praise of kings and patrons, e.g. Prayaga Prashasti was composed in Sanskrit by Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta. From this inscription, we know about the generosity, administrative capabilities of the king Samudragupta who was described as equal to different deities.

3. The context of the inscription invariably projected the perspective of the person who commissioned it. But it was not recorded what we consider politically and economically significant facts of that period. For example, routine agricultural practices, the joys and sorrows of common people were not mentioned in these inscriptions. History is not only the histories of kings, it includes different social groups and even marginalised sections of our society.

4. From mid-20th century historians' become more interested in political and economic changes of society (e.g. the ways in which different social groups emerged). This lead to fresh investigations of old sources and in this respect, inscription had its own limitations to interpret political and economic history of India.

### **Question 14.**

**Historians have used a variety of sources to reconstruct the history of the Mauryan Empire. State any four such sources.**

**Answer:**

Historians have used a variety of sources to reconstruct the history of Mauryan Empire. These were:

- Things found in archaeological excavation, specially sculpture are regarded as an important source.
- Contemporary works like writings of Megasthenes, Arthashastra by Chanakya are important sources regarding that period.
- The Mauryas were also mentioned in later Buddhist, Jaina, Puranic and Sanskrit literature.
- Moreover the inscriptions of Asoka on rocks and pillars are regarded as the most valuable sources.

**Question 15.**

**What is the role played by the coins in the decipherment of Kharosthi script?**

**Answer:**

The role played by the coins in the decipherment of Kharosthi script was:  
**Analysis of Indo-Greek Coins** The coins of Indo-Greek kings who ruled over the north-western part of the sub-continent in c. second century BCE. were analysed by the epigraphists.

**Comparison with Greek Script** The Indo-Greek coins contain the names of kings written in Greek and Kharosthi scripts. The Kharosthi script was compared with the Greek one.