Practical seminar on Malayalam palm-leaf manuscripts

Paper & Pixel
International Summer School on Digital Humanities in Indology

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Oriental Research Institute and Manuscripts
Library of the University of Kerala at Kariyavattom, Thiruvananthapuram
Malayalam script

Type: Abugida

Languages: Malayalam

Time period: c. 830-progressive

Parent systems:
- Proto-Sinaitic alphabet
- Phoenician alphabet
- Aramaic alphabet
- Brahmi script
- Grantha script
- Malayalam script

Sister systems:
- Tamil script
- Sinhala script
- yogari script

ISO 15924: x-347

Direction: Left-to-right

Unicode alias: Malayalam

Unicode range: U+0D00-U+0D7F

Malayalam

This line diagram depicts the phonetics of the primary Dravidian languages spoken in South India.

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voiced</th>
<th>Unvoiced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaspirated</td>
<td>Aspirated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vowel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Short</th>
<th>Long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diphthongs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diphthong</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Dependent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ai</td>
<td>ai</td>
<td>ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei</td>
<td>ei</td>
<td>ei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oi</td>
<td>oi</td>
<td>oi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ui</td>
<td>ui</td>
<td>ui</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verga Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Voiced</th>
<th>Voiceless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaspirated</td>
<td>Aspirated</td>
<td>Unaspirated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Voiceless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vowel</td>
<td>Unaspirated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaspirated</td>
<td>Aspirated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Palatal or Postvovular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Retroflex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dental

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lateral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>Consonant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Other consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ൃ ൄ ൅ െ േ ൈ ൉ ൊ</td>
<td>യ ന റ ല ള ഴ വ ശ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ൊ ഷ സ ട</td>
<td>ട പ സ ഹ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Common ligatures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ൃ ൄ ന് റ് ല് ള് ഴ് വ്</td>
<td>യ് ന് റ് ല് ള് ഴ് വ്</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chilli letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Unicode name</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ൃ ൄ ൅ െ േ ൈ ൉ ൊ</td>
<td>Chilli NN</td>
<td>೐ ೒ ೓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ൃ ൄ ന് റ് ല് ള് ഴ് വ്</td>
<td>Chilli N</td>
<td>೐ ೒ ೓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ൃ ൄ ര് റ് ല് ള് ഴ് വ് | Chilli NR | ೐ ೒ ೓ | Historically from ra, not from ra (RRA) o.
| ൃ ൄ ല് റ് ല് ള് ഴ് വ് | Chilli L | ೐ ೒ ೓ | Historically from la as.
| ൃ ൄ ല് റ് ന് റ് ള് ഴ് | Chilli LL | ೐ ೒ ೓ | Historically from sa as.

### Grantha script

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Unicode name</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ൃ ൄ ൅ െ േ ൈ ൉ ൊ</td>
<td>Grantha</td>
<td>೐ ೒ ೓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Unicode block for Malayalam is U+0D60–U+0D7F. Grey areas indicate non-assigned code points.

### Notes

1. As of Unicode version 7.0.

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Exposito 2012
1969-71 and 1981: Reforms of the Malayalam script

- **New Script**
- **Old Script**

1969-71 and 1981: Reforms of the Malayalam script

- Traditional: എ = എ, ഒ = ഒ
- Reformed: എ = എ, ഒ = ഒ

Sample text

- പുതിയ ലിപി / putiya lipi – new script
- പഴയ ലിപി / paḻaya lipi – old script

Translation

Manuṣyadāntānām yuvāvaiśādānāhānām antastātum svāntasyaḥ dhūtām jānti ca va viṣṇum. Anyonyam bhṛṅṅḥvāsūṣṭāte parumātavāntānāya manuṣyaḥ pravīkṣayāḥ māṇaḥsakṣayāḥ svāntamaṇātānākārṇaḥ.
Reforms of the Malayalam script

 palindrome / putiya lipi – new script

Candrakkala

either virma or ‘half-u’:

\[ m \rightarrow \text{half-u} \]

\[ \text{half-u} = m + u + \]

decimal numeration system: arkapalli

Malayalam date mark: Used in an abbreviation of a date.
Pagination II: syllabic numerals: aikaṟappali

ra = 1, rna = 2 → "nānddl" system

1 na ṇo 2 rna ṇo 3 nya ṇo 4 ṇkra ṇo 5 jhra 6 ha

7 gra 8 pra 9 dre 10 ma 11 ma na 12 ma nna

20 tha, 30 la, 40 pta, 50 ba, 60 tra, 70 trū, 80 cha, 90 na, 100 ṇa, 130 ṇa la

Pagination: decimal und syllabic numbers

TRV 5838 B

śrī 1 2 3

Pagination: "śrī" instead on "1"

TRV 5150
Auspicious beginning:

harit śrīgaṇapataye namaḥ avighnam astu

TRV 3161

TRV 5838 B

Damages of the leaf

TRV 6314 G, folio 1v.

TRV 5138 A, folio 3v.

Text flow, punctuation marks (daṇḍa)

Special marks in the form of a round flourish

Ms. TR 22846 C, folio 24v, (ca. 1500 A.D.)

Ms. TR 13079 A, folio 30v, (1850 A.D.)

Ms. TR 12356 A, folio 11v, (1890 A.D.)

Doubling of words or sentences

TRV 12356 B, folio 11:

ku is inserted

Writing errors and variant readings

Ms. TR 22846 B, folio 11r: dō bō is cancelled with lines above the respective signs and substituted with following eō

Ms. Potrīyā 11 G, folio 16r: tō is corrected to to 16ō

Ms. TP 874 M, folio 21r: insertion of gō ḫū between ma and as 10u

TRV 12356 B, folio 11: kura inserted
Writing errors and variant readings


t = ē / ēː

\( \text{ olmadığını} \)

\( \text{e} – o = \text{ō} / ō \)


Particular way of writing Prakrit

- **anusvāra and nasals in combination with consonants:**
  small circle above the preceding consonant or vowel
  \( (\text{kim dato} = \text{कि मद्वध आर्या}) \)

- **Geminate consonants:** doubling of consonants is indicated by a small circle preceding the consonant to be doubled
  \( (\text{tta = o( }) \), \( \text{ddha = o(}) \) )

- **e / o in combination with consonants:** between the circle indicating the doubling of the consonant and the consonant
  \( (\text{cche = o(}) \) )

- **writing yya:** \( \text{Prakrit asya [Sanskrit aṣṇa] = o(}) \)
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Candrakkala

\[ m \text{ na} \rightarrow m \]
\[ m + 1 + 1 \]

Cover page of the first book printed in Malayalam in 1772:

Nasrānīkal okkakum ariyentunna sanikšapavedāthān

Esposito 2012
Different scribes
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Colophon: TVM 20469 (Abhiskekantaka)

Śrīmahābhāratam

- Summary (sarkṣepam) of the Mahābhārata in "Keraḷabhāṣā"
- 245 folios (missing: 239, 240, 243) in verses (gāna)
- Colophon: completed on Wednesday, 9 Mīnam 1047 > end of April 1872 in Kunṭannūr (?) near Eṟṇākūḷam

[...] kollam 841 ta karkkāṭakaḥāḷyāja paṭinetṭā

[...] [In the year] kollam 841 (1666 AD) in the month of karkkāṭam (july / august) on the 18th [day].

budhanāṭcayum aparapakṣatīlī dvādāśiyum makayiravum anna uccakka pūja neratta tīruvṭepoi kūttampalattimakālina ejalī śrīma cūṭāṃna nāṭakam | śrīmābha | rāmalīkhitam | śivam astu |

a Wednesday and dvādāsi-day (12th day of the lunar month) in aparapakṣam (decreasing moon) with the star makayiram (mārgaśīrṣa)am, on this day at noon time during pūja (service) in the kūttampalāṭi (temple theatre) of Tīruvṭepo (Kṛṣṇa-temple near Kottayam) this writing [of the play] [Cūṭāṃna] has been completed | it has been written by Rāma | [may it be auspicious]
ya namaḥ śrīvedavyāsāya namaḥ śrīkṛṣṇāya namaḥ śrīgovindāya namaḥ śrīgopālāya namaḥ śrībhūlāya namaḥ mūkāmbike śaraṇaṃ namāmi

|| kollām 1047 (‘100-1=99 7 = 1047 Kollām = 1872 C.E.) āṁ matapaṇicama varṣam māñamāsaṃ 9āṃ ? (9. Mīnaṃ = approx. 23 April) budhānācayum (Wednesday) śūklapakṣam ēkādaśiyum pūcyam nakṣatramv kūṭiyā śubhadvasam anda l/4?? nālīka pularunpol mīnaṃ rāgikotṣa kundanāraḍesattamāvatva [Kundanāraḍesattamāvatva] Kundanor nearEmakulam (between Truptinura and Kochi) govindan ēḷiti tīṇna śrīmahābhārataṃ pūthakaṃ idam | śubham astu | karakṛtamapa

rādham kṣantumarhantī santaḥ vījaṃśaṃvararpaṇī? kavālīpūddīrghāyurārthacalīndri sargagunāṃ iṅyādī pūthakaṃ eḷuṭīlī varunu dōlam buddhi bhramā l budhājanāṉāḥ saṁciccoḷkā | śrīkṛṣṇāya namaḥ śrīgovindāya namaḥ śrībhūlāya namaḥ śrībālatārayānyā namaḥ mūkāmbika tuṇāḥ svasty astu | ṣa

Folio 245 recto = final leaf, line 3:

[...] | iti śrīmahābhārataśatasahasrākāyāṃ samhitāyāṃ svargagāṅhanaparvāṃ kathāsārā samkṣepāṃ keralabhāṣāgānvīśeṣāṃ sārasamkṣepeṃ samāptāṃ |

śrīgurucarāṇārāpadābhāyāṃ namaḥ pūtanāmaranalahavanākādaśīyena pinitadappaḥ yaśodāyāṇkāmūrṭhirpyāl nābhodyadānaṃthapā raghūṇāṃ | aksāraṃ yāl parībhraṣṭhaṃ mātrāhāntayuḥ bhavale kṣantumarhantīmāntā sāḥ kasya nāsthiyati kramāḥ govindāya mukundāya gopijanavallabhā

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Kundannoor near Ernakulam (between Tripunithura and Kochi)
approx. 23 April) budhāṇaḻcayum māṃṣānam 9āṃ (9. Mīnaṃ = approx. 23 April)

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