

Grantha - 8 - Vowel Signs



॥ ஒம் நனொ ஶாரஜிதெ ॥

| ॐ नमो मारजिते | ॐम्' நமோ மாரஜிதே |



ஸுஶஜ்ஜாநஃ சுநஶம் ஶி சூகாஸ விஸுஶம் ஸஶம்
கூபயெக் கூஶுஶாஷெனொ ந ஶ ஸுஶமுணகூயஃ

बुद्धज्ञानम् अनन्तं हि आकाश विपुलं समं

क्षपयेत् कल्पभाषन्तो न च बुद्धगुणक्षयः

பு³த்³த⁴ஜ்ஞாநம் அநந்தம்' ஶி ஆகாஸ² விபுலம்' ஸமம்'

கூபயேத் கல்பபா⁴ஷந்தோ ந ச பு³த்³த⁴கு³ணகூய:

The Buddha's knowledge is endless, just like the Great Sky

While speaking of it aeons may be destroyed, but the Buddha's virtues will never decay.

Grantha being a Brahmi-derived script, is an Abugida. Therefore it uses special vowel signs to denote the Consonant-Vowel combinations. (*Tamil*: உயிர்மெய்யெழுத்துக்கள் உயிர் மெய்யெழுத்துக்கல் uyirmeyyeluttukka!). The various Vowel signs are appended before/after/above the consonants to denote the Vowel Sound.

The Vowel Signs are nearly the same as in Tamil [except for the Sanskrit-specific Vocalic Vowels ஃஃௌ ஶு] so it will be breeze to pick them up :-)

(The Circle that appears in some of the examples denote the consonant position)

We'll see the first 8 Vowel signs in this lesson.

Vowel Signs

Virama

The Virāma, [the Grantha Equivalent of the Tamil Pulḻi புள்ளி புல்க (Dot) ̣] is used to denote the pure consonant. It is placed to the top of consonant, it is similar to the Telugu Virāma sign. (̣)

Pure consonant gh : घ : क्⁴

व + ळ → वऴ

क⁴ + ळ → कऴ⁴

The Virāma Sign may also be placed next to the Consonant वऴ, instead of the placing it in the on the top .

Apart from these, there are special forms to denote the Vowelless consonants, which will be dealt later

-a

Like all Indic scripts, क् is inherent in the consonant. it has not have any specific sign associated with it

-ā ा ा

The -ā Vowel sign is placed next to the consonant :: का चा cā

ख + ा → खा (खऴ + क्)

च + ा → चा

-i ி ி

-i Vowel sign is placed at the top of the Consonant, also extending to left of the consonant :: லி லி li

ஹ + ி → ஹி (ஹ் + ி)

ல + ி → லி

-ī ீ ி

-ī Vowel sign is placed at the top of the Consonant :: தீ³ தி dī

த³ + ீ → தீ³ (த³ + ீ)

த³ + ீ → தீ³

-u ு ு

-u Vowel sign is placed to the left of the Consonant. Unlike Tamil -u, in Modern printed grantha -u doesn't ligate with the preceding consonant. However, in the Medieval/Manuscript Grantha, -u is found ligated with the consonants :: ஸு சு su

ஸ + ு → ஸு (ஸு + ு)

ஸ + ு → ஸு

-u ூ ூ

Similar to - u, -ū is also placed next to the consonant. Though unligated in the Modern form, it is found ligated in the Medieval variant :: ஜு ூ ju

ஜ + ூ → ஜு (ஜ் + ூ)

ஐ + ூ → ஐு

-r ூ ூ

-r Vowel sign is placed to the left of the consonant. As like -u/ū it was ligated in Medieval/Manuscript grantha, but is unligated in the Modern printed Grantha :: ப்⁴ரு' ூ bhr

ஹ + ூ → ஹு (ஹ் + ூ)

ப⁴ + ூ → ப்⁴ரு'

-r̄ ூ ூ

-r̄ Vowel sign is placed to the left of the consonant :: க்³ரு' ூ gr̄

ഗ + ூ → ഗു (ഗ് + ூ)

ക³ + ூ → ക്³ரு'

-! ്ലു' ള്

-! Vowel sign is simply ള placed next to the consonant. It doesn't have special vowel sign ::
കുലു' ക്ല k!

ക + ള → കല (ക് + ള)

ക + ്ലു' → കുലു'

Very rarely, it Vowel ള is also placed below the consonant ക്ല.

-! ്ലു' ള്

-! Vowel sign is placed next to the consonant :: ക്ലു' ക്ല k!

ക + ള് → കല (ക് + ള)

ക + ്ലു' → ക്ലു'

It can also have below-consonant form like -!

The remaining vowels & Ayogavāhas will be covered in the following lesson.

BTW Wish you all a prosperous and happy New Year 2011 :-)

நுதந ஸம்வதரஸு ஸுலாஸயாஃ

nūtana samvatsarasya śubhāśayāḥ | नूतन संवत्सरस्य शुभाशयाः | நூதந ஸம்'வத்ஸரஸ்ய ஸு²பா⁴ஸ²யா:

|| யஜெநா ரக்ஷதி ரக்ஷிதஃ ||
