

# **ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF INDIAN LITERATURE**

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**SUPPLEMENTARY ENTRIES  
AND  
INDEX**



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## ALPHABET (KONKANI)

graphemes taught were those of the Sharada script which was, in course of time, adopted by the evolving Kashmiri language too. Later on, after the advent of Islam in Kashmir, Persian gradually became the language of court and culture; and consequently Kashmiri also had to switch over to it as the predominant script. Attempts, of course, were made from time to time to adopt the Perso-Arabic script to the phonetic needs peculiar to the Kashmiri language.

The finalisation of the script was, no doubt, arrived at after a series of deliberations by a number of committees set up for the purpose from time to time. Among the several attempts made at Devanagari and Roman transcription of the Kashmiri alphabet may be mentioned those by Pandit Ishwar Kaul for his *Kashmirasabdnamitam*, (1876-98), and by Grierson for his *Manual* (1911). Modifications were later on suggested by Grahame Bailey in his *Kashmiri Sounds* (1937), by Kaul in *Pratap* (1959), by Pushp in *Kashmir Research Biannual* (1960) and by Kachru in *Reference Grammar of Kashmiri* (1969). The latest outlook on the problem of transcription (as suggested by Pushp) is the adoption of a simple (Kashmiri) 'modifier' as a consistent device of phonemic indication, or a 'differential' such as a digraph and a 'dot' or a 'dash' already available in the keyboard and the fount. Adoption of the apostrophe for the purpose (as in the Devanagari version of Pushp's *Kashmiri Gita-pravachan*, (1959) proved no more than an emergency device because of its clumsy setting and confusing placement. It proved inconvenient too, particularly when the apostrophe had to be used on its own. Use of the international phonetic script introduced by Toshakhani (primarily for the Kashmiri section of the *Pratap* magazine during the late thirties) had also been found inconvenient. On the contrary, a digraph and the 'dot' or the 'dash' simply tell out a modified sound in terms of an extended grapheme, quite in consonance with the script concerned.

The alphabet would, accordingly, correspond to the following roman parallels:

a aa aā i ee i ē ē	a:ḍ ; u : ü
u oo o oe e ae	aā (long); oō (long)
p ph t th ṭ ṭ ṣ	oe (as in toe); ae (as in ate)
j ch chh ḥ kh	s (as in the Urdu asar)
d q z r r z ts tsh	ḥ (as in Urdu haq)
s sh ṣ z t z	kh (as in Urdu khabar)
	z (as in Urdu zara)
	ts (as in Tib. Tsering)
	ṣ (as in Urdu sabr)
	z (as in Urdu zarb and zarf)
	t (as in Urdu khat)
	a' h f q k kh g
	l m n v (-va) h y (-ya) (-y)

In the Devanagari transcription, similarly, a lot of confusion could be avoided if a dot or a small dash could be adopted as a 'modifier': a dot below the letters for ch and chh in the case of ts and tsh; and a small dash below the letters for the vowels a, aa, u, oo, oe and ae. Such a device would involve no distortion of the parent script nor any inferential exercise.

Finally it needs to be pointed out that Kashmiri, like any other language, could be learnt through any script or language, but, for a real feel of the Kashmiri literature, no learner can afford to do without the script which history has evolved for it.

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P.N.P.

**ALPHABET (Konkani).** The Alphabet used by the Kannada language in olden times was known as Halle-Kannada (old Kannada). As the Kanarese kings ruled over territory that comprised the region of Konkani, particularly the Goa region of the time that encompassed about 900 villages from Chitakul in Karnataka to Dabhol in Maharashtra, where the Konkani language was spoken, that alphabet had influence on the language of this region. However, a modified form of that alphabet was in use in this region that was known as Kandevis to the local people and was referred to as Goy-Kanadi by the others, respectively. This is evidenced from written records of the village communes in Goa of that period before the arrival of the Portuguese at the turn of the sixteenth century and even later. This was the alphabet in which they found the Konkani language being written at the time of Goa's conquest in 1510 and labelled it as 'Canarim' as distinguished from 'Canares' which later was the term used to denote Kannada. This alphabet continued to be used for Konkani writing side by side with the Devanagari and Roman alphabets till the end of the nineteenth century, as seen from village commune records, but gradually petered out and went out of circulation by that time.

The arrival of the Portuguese missionaries and the installation of their printing press in 1556 in Goa, the first on the subcontinent, and with Roman types, introduced this alphabet to the Konkani language, which has remained quite dominant in its writing to-date in literature and journalism, as also in religious services. It serves as the major alphabet for large sections of the Konkani people in Goa and Bombay in particular for their reading materials which are all in Roman script.

## ALPHABET (URDU)

The exodus of the Konkani from their homeland, Goa, assailed by accidents of history, epidemics and famines and lured by business interests in some cases in the 14th, 16th 17th and 18th centuries, to Karnataka and Kerala and their settlement in those states permanently, brought about communities which spoke Konkani among themselves, but had to communicate in Kannada and Malayalam respectively in the states of their habitat in writing, and adopted the Kannada and Malayalam alphabets even while articulating in their own mother tongue, Konkani, for literary and related purposes. While these two groups of people were mainly Hindus and Christians in terms of religious complexion, there was a sizeable number of Konkani Muslims in Goa and emigrants to Karnataka, particularly in places like Bhatkal and surroundings, who took up the Perso-Arabic alphabet for their writing in Konkani. These were known as Nawait Muslims in that region and they ran several magazines even in Konkani in the medium of that alphabet. The noted Hindi scholar, Rahul Sankrityayana, is reported to have asserted that he saw Muslims in the territory of Coorg writing Konkani in the Perso-Arabic script too. Thus Konkani came to be written in as many as five scripts or alphabets for its literature.

However, since the merger of Goa, the heartland of Konkani, into India in 1961, the process of a more frequent interaction and closer contacts between the diverse communities speaking that language, intensified and led to a better emotional integration among them. A movement towards a consensus in favour of the Devanagari alphabet has emerged over the last three decades of a concerted endeavour in this direction through the efforts of various organisations wedded to the development of the language and its literature, particularly the Konkani Parishads and writers, conferences held periodically in various centres in the four states where the language is spoken, viz. Goa, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala. The inclusion of Konkani in the eighth schedule to the Indian Constitution as one of the 'national languages' of the country and its earlier approval as 'one of the literary languages' of India by the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi (1975), has hastened this process of integration and adoption of Devanagari alphabet as the appropriate and uniform alphabet for the language. The result of these efforts have succeeded in virtually eliminating Malayalam alphabet for writings by the Konkani of Kerala. There is hardly anything being done in the Perso-Arabic script. That leaves the field to the three leading alphabets for Konkani, the Devanagari, the Roman and the Kannada. The Devanagari alphabet has, however, been adopted as the alphabet for educational purposes in the state of Goa, from primary to the university level, and

should be expected to be the sole alphabet for Konkani in the foreseeable future, and lead to a better cohesion in literary and other intellectual endeavour.

O.G.

**ALPHABET** (Urdu) is the Indian adaptation of Persian alphabet which in its turn was an adaptation of Arabic alphabet in accordance with the phonetic needs of Dari (standard Persian) language. In the pre-1947 India, there were two basic alphabets adopted by the large number of Indian languages for their respective scripts. These were: (1) Persian (Arabic) alphabet which was adopted by Sindhi, Kashmiri, Western Punjabi and Urdu; and (2) Brahmi alphabet, used in Brahmi script, which in the course of over two thousand years evolved into various Indian scripts like Devanagari, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Marathi and Gurmukhi, besides a few other minor scripts.

All early Semitic scripts adopted the North Semitic alphabet which had 22 characters for 22 phonemes. An important descendant of North Semitic was Aramaic which later developed into Arabic. The early Arabic and its sister script, Kufi, which were developed from Nabathaeen had only 22 letters in the same order as in the early Semitic scripts. These had individual numerical values too. In Arabic names they are : Alif (1), Be (2), Jim (3), Dal (4), He (5), Waw (6), Ze (7), He (8), Toi (9), Ye (10), Kaf (20), Lam (30), Mim (40), Nun (50), Sin (60), Ain (70), Fe (80), Suad (90), Qaf (100), Re (200), Shin (300) and Te (400). Later, Arabic added six letters: Se (500) Khe (600), Zal (700), Duad (800), Zoi (900) and Ghain (1000).

Later, perhaps for the facility of teaching, this order was changed and characters were bracketted according to their shapes. Thus the new Arabic alphabet developed like this: Alif, Be, Te, Se, Jim, He, Khe, Dal, Zal, Re, Ze, Sin, Shin, Suad, Duad, Toi, Zoi, Ain, Ghain, Fe, Qaf, Kaf, Lam, Mim, Nun, Waw, He and Ye. In this system Alif, Waw and Ye were semi-vowels and the other 25 pure consonants. A speciality of this system was the identification of glottal stop, called Hamza or consonantal Alif. In Brahmi and other Indian scripts too glottal stop was partly identified while in the western scripts this phoneme was ignored. It can be conjectured that in Aramaic this identification was more or less made. In earlier Semitic scripts it was not there, and Greek, which branched off earlier, did not have it.

When Arabic script was adopted by Iranians they retained all its characters though they could not properly pronounce eight of them: Se, Zal, Suad, Duad, Toi, Zoi, Ain and Qaf. They had some special phonemes and they modified the parent script to represent them through additional marks. These were: Pe, Che, Zhe and Gaf and