

A Paleographical Study of the Morphological Diversity in Sinhala Vowels ෙ and ඌ

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According to the short-long classification of the modern Sinhala vowels, the morphological similarity found in each vowel is a characteristic of the Arya and Anarya languages. The short-long difference in the same vowel is due to a small image segment. Although this morphological similarity is common to all other vowels, it does not apply to ෙ and ඌ vowels in the Sinhala alphabet. They are two different characters. Archaeologically, the variation of letters ෙ and ඌ are not found in Initial Sinhala records of palaeography and can be seen from the 10th and 12th centuries AD. The background for this research is the variation found in ෙ and ඌ letters. According to that, the morphological similarity in the short-long division of every vowel is not found in the letters ෙ and ඌ vowels for what reason? That is the research problem here. This research aims to provide an opportunity to give paleographical reasons for issues that arise in studying the Sinhala alphabet ‘systematically and practically’ about characters with morphological differences and to aid modern teaching by studying the history of characters. Field studies and textbooks will be reviewed as the primary source under the qualitative research method. The other data will be collected through recognised inscriptions, relevant books, reports, research, and articles. Although the alphabets of South Asian countries influenced the formation of the Sinhalese alphabet, the emergence of independent letters also occurred. Are the vowels ෙ and ඌ also letters with such independence? This research can confirm this, and information about the development process of the letter ෙ and ඌ from the beginning of the Sinhala script to its modern form will also be revealed.

Keywords: Morphological characters, ෙ- ඌ letters, Palaeography, Vowels, Sinhala alphabets