

A HISTORY OF THE MYANMAR ALPHABET

Beginning with Brāhmī

1. All researchers who have studied the origin and development of the Myanmar script accept that its source was the Brāhmī script which flourished in India from about 500 B.C. to over 300 A.D.
2. Myanmar script like the Brāhmī script is a system of writing constructed from consonants, consonant combination symbols ङ, छ, ष, ण; vowel symbols related to the relevant consonants, and diacritic marks indicating tone level (niggahita, visajjaniya). Though the number of consonants and vowels, and the name and number of symbols are slightly different due to the difference in the languages which employ the Brāhmī script, the Myanmar writing system and those which employ the Brāhmī writing system are basically the same.
3. A study of the track the change through the ages of Brāhmī consonants, consonant combination symbols, vowels, vowel symbols and diacritic marks clearly show the relationship with the forms of Myanmar consonants, consonant combination symbols, vowels, vowel symbols and diacritic marks.
4. The relationship of similarity between characters and letter forms suggests there is no denying that Myanmar script had its source in Brāhmī.

Scripts developed from Brāhmī

5. The first Brāhmī script was seen about 500 B.C. It had spread throughout India by 300 B.C. in the reign of King Asoka.
6. After the dissolution of the Maurya Kingdom established by King Asoka, first the Kusāna and Gupta for the kings. The such convoluted scripts as Kutila and urban Nāgarī, simple script like Shārdā and Bengali developed progressively according to region and period. Writing forms in those scripts become gradually differentiated regionally and historically.
7. In South India, the Andhra dynasty arose after the dissolution of the Maurya kingdom. Then arose such dynasties as Pallava, Kadamba, Cālukya and Rashtrakuta.
8. These Indian Scripts descended from Brāhmī spread to Tibet, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Indonesia along with the Indian beliefs and culture in the period 100 A.D. to 800 A.D. and helped in the development in those regions of indigenous scripts.

Spread of Indian scripts to Myanmar

9. During the period 100 A.D. to 1200 A.D. when the Brāhmī script developed gradually into Brāhmī-derived scripts in India, there developed in Myanmar the civilization of Pyu, Myanmar, Mon and Rakhine. These civilizations communicated with the countries in east and west. There was special communication with India in the west by land and sea. Buddhism reached Myanmar very early because of such intercourse. Brāhmī script and scripts derived from Brāhmī arrived in Myanmar in their successive periods. The indigenous peoples of Myanmar employed those scripts to inscribe and study extracts from the Pali teachings of Buddha and recorded acts of charity and merit in Sanskrit. When the conditions developed to use writing for their indigenous languages, they adapted and devised consonants and vowels signs and symbols based on the familiar contemporary Brāhmī - derived scripts to approximate as close as possible the sounds of their languages.

Writing in Myanmar in the sixth century

10. Writing in the sixth century A.D. found in Myanmar are bell inscriptions, brass plate inscriptions and lithic inscriptions of Rakhine Vesali, Pyu lithic inscriptions of Hanlin, Pali inscriptions in Pyu script in gold leaf and silver leaf found around Thayekhittaya, funerary urn inscriptions in Pyu script, writing round the plinths of Buddha images in Pyu and Sanskrit.

11. **Writing in Rakhine.** Ancient writing of the fourth to sixth century A.D. found in Rakhine Vesali is Sanskrit or Sanskrit mixed with Pali. The script is similar to the Gupta script descended from Brāhmī.
12. **Pyu writing.** Writing of the period A.D. 400 to 600 is found in Ayeyarwady Valley in the form of stone inscriptions (such as the Hanlin Pyu stone Inscriptions) in Pyu characters and Pyu language, extracts from the Buddhist Canon on gold plates in Pyu characters, and stone inscriptions in mixed pyu and Sanskrit languages.
13. The Pyu people had established in urban civilization by about A.D. 400. They were familiar not only with the literature of India but had also devised a script based on the script of that literature of their own Pyu language.
14. Based on the Pyu writing of A.D. 400, it can be surmised that the Pyu script was first derived in about A.D. 300-400. The old Pyu script resembles that Kadamba script of southern India. Thus, epigraphical researchers conclude that the Pyu devised their script on the basis of the Kadamba script. Though the Pyu accepted and employed the Kadamba script as a basis, it is evident that they were also familiar with the Gupta script as seen in some Pyu-Sanskrit bilingual religious inscriptions. Vertically exaggerated letters as in the Jaggayapeta script are found in many Pyu stone inscriptions. This indicates that though Pyu script was based on the Kadamba script it was not free from the influence of other contemporary Indian scripts.

Writing from A.D. 600 to 1200

15. Writing found in Myanmar during this period are Sanskrit stone inscriptions from Rakhine Vesali, Pyu stone inscriptions from various parts of Myanmar, Mon stone inscriptions and Myanmar stone inscriptions.
16. **Rakhine Vesali.** Ananda-Candra stone inscriptions and other stone inscriptions are found at Rakhine vesali during this period. The stone inscriptions inscribed in the Nāgarī script which is descended from the Gupta scripts. The Vesali period flourished till A.D. 900 but few inscriptions are to be found after A.D. 800.
17. **Pyu writing.** Historical researchers hold the opinion that Pyu urban states were extant in Myanmar till A.D. 900-1000. Pyu stone inscriptions are to be found widely. However, it is difficult to date these Pyu stone inscriptions because they do not carry dates and some are almost illegible. The period is assessed by century on the basis of the form of the characters. However, it can be firmly held that Pyu writing was in use at the end of the 11th century and beginning of the 12th on the evidence of the Rajakumar Stone inscription in Pyu language at the beginning of the 12th century and Pyu plaque inscriptions inscribed during the reign of Kyansittha.
18. **Mon writing.** The earliest Mon writing is found on the plaque in the relic chamber of the Kyaik-day-art pagoda inscribed with the Pali verse beginning 'Ye-dhammā'. The characteristics of the script date it as of the 7th century A.D. The Trap stone inscriptions and the Pandit stone inscriptions of Thaton are inscribed in the Mon language. They are undated but the form of the characters place them in the 10th and 11th centuries. From the reign of Anawrahta in the 11th century to the reign of Alaungsithu in the 12th century, Mon stone inscriptions, tablets, plaques and wall inscriptions are found in many places in Myanmar. The Shwezigon Mon stone inscriptions otherwise known as Kyansittha stone inscription, Myankan Mon stone inscription and Rajakumar Mon stone inscription are famous.
19. Evidence found within Myanmar is not sufficient to trace the origins of Mon writing. The Mons resided widely within south-east Asia from the beginning of the Christian era. Thus, stone inscriptions inscribed with Mon characters in Mon language may be seen in Dvaravati of Thailand. These are Pra Pathom stone inscriptions estimated to be the 7th century A.D. and Lopburi stone inscriptions of the 8th, 9th century A.D. The formation of consonants, vowels and orthography suggests that these stone inscriptions are about three centuries earlier than the 10th-11th century stone inscriptions found in Myanmar, at Thaton. Those characters may be compared with the characters of the tablet beginning Ye-dhamma of Kyaik-day-art pagoda. They may also be compared with Pyu characters. From the evidence it may be estimated that Mon writing originated about the 5th or 6th century A.D. Epigraphy shows that the style of writing of the earliest Mon stone inscriptions is similar to the style found in the Cambodian Takap stone inscriptions, and Laokao Wat stone inscriptions both inscribed in Sanskrit. This shows that the Mon were familiar with Pali and Sanskrit material and Indian scripts used for such tracts before indigenous writing was developed. The earliest Mon writing and script and characters of Cambodian stone inscriptions are similar to the Pallava script of the fourth century A.D. South India. Thus, epigraphers conclude that the Mon based their script on the Pallava script of South India. Though the Mon based their script on the Pallava, they devised new consonants to suit their own language. The Mon accepted devowelizer symbols which can be found in other south India scripts as Cālukya and Vallabhi. These show that though Mon script was based on Pallava, it was not free of the influence of contemporary Indian scripts.

20. **Myanmar writing.** The earliest Myanmar writing is from the Bagan period of 11th and 12th centuries. Rajakumar stone inscription was inscribed in about 475 B.E. or A.D. 1113 which is early 12th century. There are earlier Myanmar writings. In Kyansittha's Myankan Mon stone inscription of the name of the lake 'Maha Nibban Leswe Chi Ye' is inserted in Myanmar. This inscription is earlier than Rajakumar that Tetso Taung Pawdawmu pagoda inscriptions were earlier than Rajakumar inscription by about 50 years. From the reign of Anawratha of Bagan to the reign of Alaung-sithu, it was the fashion to offer votive tablets at the pagodas. Donors would inscribe a few lines about their act of merit in a language selected from Pali, Mon, Pyu and Myanmar. Among such votive tablets those found in the field of U Chit Sa of Bagan are held to be very early by virtue of formation of characters and orthography. It may be said from the evidence that Myanmar writing was well established by the 11th century.

21. Just as there is the relationship of the development of the scripts of the Pyu and Mon to the development of the Pyu and Mon urban states, so also there is the relationship of the development of Myanmar writing to the development of the Myanmar urban state. Though the Bagan state was in existence from ancient days it began to flourish only during Anawratha's reign in the 11th century. The Myanmar were familiar with Sanskrit and Pali literature and Pyu and Mon writing before the development of Myanmar writing. In terms of scripts they were also familiar in the 10th and 11th centuries with Nāgarī, Pyu and Mon characters. By the end of the 9th century A.D, the head-marks developed from the horizontal head-lines in Mon characters had more or less disappeared. But these head-marks continued to be seen in Pyu characters till the 12th century. In writing Pyu characters, much up and down space was utilized in drawing the vertically elongated letters. Such vertically elongated letters are also found in the Para Pathom Mon stone inscriptions. The vertically displacement had become shorter in the 10th to 11th century Thaton Mon stone inscriptions. The Mon characters of the 10th and 11th centuries have a simpler form than contemporary Pyu characters. For these reason when the time came to develop the Myanmar script, simple and easy Mon characters were selected over the more difficult Nāgarī and Pyu characters. Thus, from the Bagan period Myanmar characters and symbols became similar in form to Mon characters and symbols.

22. The developers of the Myanmar script took what was appropriate to the Myanmar language from Sanskrit, Pali, Pyu and Mon scripts, and rejected what was not appropriate. Sanskrit consonants ṅ and ṅ̄, and Mon consonants ṅ and ṅ̄, unnecessary in Myanmar, were rejected. (Note ṅ and ṅ̄ maybe found in some stone inscriptions but not extensively.) Though ta, th and d were not consonants used in Myanmar they were retained so as not to create difficulty in the study of Pali. The vowel mark ̄ (the long o), the tone mark (-), the character ၵ, ၶ, ၷ though not extant in Pali and Mon were devised. Thus, the Myanmar script which is similar to the Mon script which is descended from Brāhmī, and which is also related to Pali, Sanskrit and Mon scripts began to be developed in the Bagan period according to the style and manner of the Myanmar.

Writing after the 12th century

23. **Pyu writing.** After the Rajakumar stone inscription of the early 12th century no more Pyu writing has been found.

24. **Mon writing.** Mon stone inscriptions began to disappear after the latter part of the 12th century. However, Mon writing continued to be alive in Lower Myanmar, Middle Mon stone inscriptions began to be found around Hanthawaddy in the 15th century A.D. Mon writing is thriving in the Mon state today.

25. **Myanmar writing.** Myanmar writing has developed onward from 12th century to date.

26. **Indigenous writing related to Myanmar writing.** Indigenous writing related to Myanmar writing are found after the 12th century. These are Karen, Pa-o and Shan writing. These scripts should continue to be studied.

Myanmar Consonants

27. In the Myanmar thinbongyi (primer) there are 33 consonants.

က, ခ, ဂ, ဃ, င 5 letters in the က group

စ, ဆ, ဇ, ဈ, ည 5 letters in the စ group

ဋ, ဌ, ဒ, ဎ, ဏ 5 letters in the ဋ group

က, ဝ, ဒ, ဓ, န 5 letters in the က group

ပ, ဖ, ဗ, ဘ, မ 5 letters in the ပ group

ယ, ရ, လ, ဝ

သ, ဟ, ဠ, အ 8 letters in the သ group

There are 25 grouped letters and 8 letters are not grouped.

28. In the traditional writing of Pali, အ with a superscripted dot (အံ) is added to က . . . ဠ to make 33 consonants in the alphabets က . . . ဠ,အံ. Only the superscript dot is taken to be the consonant. The အ is added only to enable pronunciation.

(Note: Some scholars add a heavy tone marker(:) to make altogether 34 consonants. Some make 35 consonants by က . . . ဠ,အံ,အံ့,အံး or က . . . ဠ,အံ့,အံ,အံး. This is adding subscript dot(·) and heavy tone marker (:) to (-) as consonants.

29. Counting 33 consonants ending in အ give reference to Myanmar orthography, while 33 consonants ending in အံ gives reference to phonology.

30. Scholars who wish to end in အံ say အ is a vowel and should not be listed as a consonant; only အံ should be included. However, it is found that အ has served both as vowel and a consonant from the Bagan period.

- (a) Just as the 32 consonants from က to ဠ can be extended by conjoining vowel symbols, so also အ can be extended by conjoining those vowel symbols
- (b) Just as other consonants can be written combined with ဝဆွဲ subscript, so also အ can be combined with ဝဆွဲ (eg. အွတ်).
- (c) Just as consonants can be written with superscript devowelizer, so also အ was written with devowelizer symbol in the Bagan period (eg. ဝေိအိယ ဝေုါအိယ တပေိအိ).

31. On this evidence it is clear that when Myanmar people of old expressed Myanmar language sounds by means of letters, they invented and used အ as consonant. Thus when displaying the extension of consonants in thinbongyi, အ which assumes all the functions of a consonants is displayed at the end with အံ which correct in their own manner in the Pali Texts, the 33 consonants beginning with က and ending with အ which meet Myanmar needs are accepted consistently in the thinbongyi.

32. In Myanmar writing, in addition to the 33 consonants of para 27, small ဥ used in Pali literature is also employed. In Pali literature, the ဝ group contains only ဝ,ဆ,ဇ,ဈ and ဥ in the small form. Big ည in Pali is small ဥ conjoined. In Myanmar writing from the Bagan period, the group ဝ,ဆ,ဇ,ဈ,ည has been formed with big ည. In the lithic inscriptions of Bagan, Pinya and early Inwa periods, small ဥ has rarely been used even in inscribing Pali verses. Only big ည is used. Thus, big ည has been regularly used in early Myanmar literature (eg. ပညဝဂ္ဂီ, ဗျညန, ညာဏ်). Small ဥ came to be used only in about 800 M.E (1438 A.D.). Even then, in the writing of royal literature during the Konbaung period, small ဥ was not used because it "lacked a head". Only big ည was used. When ဋ was to be used, it was differentiated from ညံ by means of superscribed dot ညံ. Thus in writing out the 33 consonants, big ည has been used consistently from the Bagan Period. If small ဥ is to be included in the ဝ group, then there would be six letters in this group as ဝ,ဆ,ဇ,ဈ,ဥ,ည which would not be consistent with the collection of 5 letters in each group. Thus since big ည has been placed in that group, ဥ is not counted as a consonant.

33. In some Myanmar lithic inscriptions of the Bagan period, two Sanskrit consonants are found. These are ဓ and ဖ.

Myanmar consonant combination symbols

34. There are four basic consonant combination symbol in Myanmar writing ၵ, ၵ, ၵ, ၵ. These symbols may be combined with appropriate consonants out of 33 such as ကျ, ပြ, စွ, လှ. These symbols may also be combined with each other in twos or threes as in လျှ, ကြွ, မြွ.

35. The five combinations of two symbols are

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ

36. The two combinations of three symbols are:

ၵ + ၵ + ၵ = ၵ

(Note: though no word with this combination has been found, the possibility is displayed in thinbongyi)

ၵ + ၵ + ၵ = ၵ

Thus, there are altogether 11 consonant combination symbols.

37. These symbols have been used since Myanmar writing began in the Bagan period. Additionally, from the Bagan period to the Inwa period, the subscripted လ (လဆွဲ) was also extant. လဆွဲ combines with consonants in the က and ဝ groups. (e.g. ကဆွဲ, လဆွဲ) After 800 M.E (1438 A.D.) လဆွဲ which combined with က group was substituted by ကလ and လဆွဲ which combined with ဝ group consonants was substituted by ရရစ် (eg. ကလ, လပျ). This change was effected by probably due to pronunciation change.

38. With the addition of the လဆွဲ there were five more double combinations than at the present time. The following double combination symbols were used form the Bagan to the Inwa period

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ (eg. ကျ, ကျ)

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ (eg. ကျ, ကျ)

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ (eg. ကျ, ကျ)

ၵ + ၵ = ၵ (eg. ကျ)

Thus, till about 800 M.E (1438 A.D.) in the Inwa period, sixteen consonant combination symbols were employed.

When the sound of လ went out of existence in about 800 M.E, the eleven symbols became constant.

Myanmar devowelizing consonants.

39. There are ten consonants used for devowelizing

က group က်, င်

စ group စ်, ည်

တ group တ်, န်

ဝ group ဝ်, မ်

non-group ဝ်

40. ဝဏ္ဏဗောဓနသတ်အင်း shows eight devowelizing consonants က်,င်,စ်,ည်,တ်,န်,ပ်,မ်. ဝေါဟာရတ္ထပကာသနီ shows ten with ယ်,ဝ် added to the above eight. Myanmar thinbongyi shows the same ten.

41. In the history of devowlizers, ဝ် became extinct in the 19th century. ြ် was used in about the 15th century (M.E800). Later, it was rejected as being "headless", therefore inauspicious. However, its use became established by the end of the 19th century.

42. According to the history, setting aside ဝ် which became unused and adding ြ် which came to be employed, ten devowelizing consonants may be counted.

43. In the early stages of Myanmar writing there were up to 12 devowelizers က်,င်,စ်,ည်,တ်,န်,ပ်,မ်,ယ်,ဝ်,တ်,အ်.

44. At the time ဟ် was used in place of the present heavy tome marker (-း). (eg. သာဟ် = သား, ဖျက်ဆိဟ်=ဖျက်ဆီး). ဟ် disappeared at the beginning of the 13th century. This marker (-း) came to be used extensively in 16th century.

45. အ် was found from the beginning of Myanmar writing till the 16th century. Letters such as ဝေ , ဧ with long sound and no devowelizer were made abrupt by devowelizing with အ် written as အေ , ဧအ် and read with a creaky tone as ပေ, အေ့. Long vowel sounds with devowelizers such as နှင်, အမ်, နိယ် were made abrupt by နှင်အ် , အမ်အ်, နိယ်အ် but instead of writing the two devowelizers in sequence, they were written stacked as in နှင်္ဂ်, အမ်္ဂ်, နိယ်္ဂ် . They were read as နှင့် , အံ့ , နေ့ . Thus , there existed အ် and reduced အ် as ြ် . This အ် disappeared about the 16th century (900M.E).* which was seen in form as a subscript successively metamorphosed into subscript dot(-) .

Pali and Sanskrit derived devowelizer

46. Myanmar has borrowed words from Pali and Sanskrits since the advent of contact with those languages. Some words have been borrowed *in toto*(e.g. ဒါန , သီလ , အနိစ္စ , ဒုက္ခ , အနတ္တ). Some words have been adapted to suit Myanmar tongue and ear (e.g. စိတ္တ > စိတ် , ဓာတု > ဓာတ် , စရိတ > စရိတ် , မန္တန်). In adapting Pali and Sanskrit words various means were employed. The final consonant was dropped.(e.g. မဂ္ဂံ > မဂ် by dropping final ဝ). The vowel of the final syllable was dropped.(e.g. ဓာတု > ဓာတ် by dropping vowel ဉ of တု). Thus there came to be Pali and Sanskrit derived words like မဂ် , ဓာတ် with final devowelizers. Thus Pali and Sanskrit devowelizers came into the Myanmar language to augment the ten Myanmar devowelizers. Myanmar used these Pali and Sanskrit derived devowelizers from the 11th century of the Bagan period. The adaptation of Pali and Sanskrit words by devowelizing in the Myanmar manner is found in the literature to be the devowelizing method of သဒ္ဒါနုသင်္ဂဟီ . Shin Okkanthamala in his ဝဏ္ဏဗောဓနသတ်အင်း calls it "devowelizing according to Magadha". Collected lists of words derived from Pali and Sanskrit by devowelizing may be found in သဒ္ဒါနုသင်္ဂဟီသတ်ပုံကျမ်း (1215 M.E) by မုံညင်းဆရာတော်ရှင်ဝိသုဒ္ဓ and ပါဠာနုသင်္ဂဟီသတ်ပုံကျမ်း (1221 M.E) by တောင်ငူမြို့စာရေးကြီးဦးကြီး .

47. Twenty seven Pali and Sanskrit derived devowelizers are found. ဝဏ္ဏဗောဓနသတ်အင်း shows 22 while လယ်တီဆရာတော် shows 25 in သင်ပုန်းကြီးသံခိပ် . Of the 27, ဝဏ္ဏဗောဓန excludes ခ , ဉ , ဌ , ထ , ဓ , ဘ , but includes ချ . The သင်ပုန်းကြီးသံခိပ် excludes စ , ဌ , ဝ but includes ဃ . The devowelizers, word examples and original Pali and Sanskrit words are shown below.

devowelizer	example	original Pali/Sanskrit
-က်	စက်, ဝိပါက်, ကရဝိက်, သုက်, ဧက်, စရိက်	စက္က, ဝိပါက, ကရဝိက, သုက္က, ဧက, စရိတ
-ခ်	မုခ်	မုခ
-ဝ်	ဝဂ်, ယုဂ်	ဝဂ္ဂ, ယုဂ
-င်	မဟာဝင်, လိင်, နိသိဒ္ဓိင်, မဏ္ဍိုင်	မဟာဝံသ, လိင်္ဂ, နိသိဒ္ဓန, မဏ္ဍလ
-စ်	နစ်, နိစ်, ဝုစ်	နစ္စ, နိစ္စ, ဝုစ္စ
-ဇ်	ဧကရာဇ်, ပရဗိုဇ်	ဧကရာဇာ, ပရိဗာဇက
-ည်	သံယောဇည်, ယာည်, သေည်, သုည်း, သိညာည်	သံယောဇန, ယာန, သေယ, သုည, ဝိညာဏ

-ည်	သဒည်, နည်း, ဗျည်း	ဥဒယ, နယ, ဗျဉ္ဇန
-ဋ်	ဝဋ်, ဝိဇ္ဇကုဋ်, မကိုဋ်	ဝဋ္ဌ, ဝိဇ္ဇကုဋ္ဌ, မကုဋ္ဌ
-ဌ်	ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ်, ပါဌ်	ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ, ပါဌ
-ဏ်	ဒဏ်, ဉာဏ်, ပကိဏ်း, ဂုဏ်, လိုဏ်	ဒဏှာ, ဉာဏာ, ပကိဏှကာ, ဂုဏာ, လောဏာ
-တ်	နတ်, နိပါတ်, စိတ်, မုတ်, ခေတ်	နာထ, နိပါတ, စိတ္တ, မုတ္တ, ခေတ္တ
-ထ်	ဣရိယာပုထ်	ဣရိယာပထ
-ဒ်	လဒ်, ပါဒ်, ပုဒ်, ပိုဒ်	လဒ္ဓ, ပါဒ, ပဒ, ပဒ
-မ်	ပဋိသိမ်, ဝဇီရာဝုမ်	ပဋိသေဓ, ဝဇီရာဝုဓ
-န်	ကန်, မာန်, မိန်, မဟာဝုန်, ဖန်, သိန်	ကဗျာ (သ), မာန, မိန, မဟာဝန, ဖလိက, သိရိ
-ပ်	ကပ်, ကလာပ်, သံခိပ်, ရုပ်	ကပ္ပ, ကလာ, သင်္ခေပ, ရူပ
-ဗ်	ဒြပ်	ဒြဗျ(သ)
-ဘ်	လာဘ်	လာဘ
-မ်	နာမ်, သိမ်	နာမ, သီမာ
-ယ်	အသူရကာယ်	အသူရကာယ
-ရ်	မာရ်, ထေရ်, ပဟိုရ်	မာရ, ထေရ, ပဟာရ
-လ်	ဗိုလ်	ဗလ
-ဝ်	သိဗ္ဗိုဝ်း, မဗ္ဗဇိုဝ်း	သဗ္ဗိဝ, မာဃဒေဝ
-သ်	ဇောတိရသ်, ဉာသ်, ဥပုသ်	ဇောတိရသ, ဉာသ, ဥပေါသထ
-ဟ်	သိဟ်, သဂြိုဟ်	သီဟ, သဂြိုဟ(သ)
-ဋ်	ပြုဗ္ဗာသာဋ်, သီဟိုဋ်	ပူဝီမာပ(သ), သီဟဋ

(Note: 1. when words like ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ, အဋ္ဌ which end with ဋ် + ဋ are adopted to Myanmar, the last consonant ဋ should be dropped while ဋ် remains. However, ဋ် is dropped and the words are traditionally written with ဋ to make ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ်, အဋ္ဌ် .
2. The word derived from Pali ဣရိယာပထ used to be written ဣရိယာပုထ် but now is written in the Myanmar style တ် .
3. ဒြပ် derived from Sanskrit ဒြ ဗျ was written ဒြပ် with ဗ် but is now written in Myanmar style with ဝ်
4. သိဗ္ဗိုဝ်း, မဗ္ဗဇိုဝ်း derived from Pali သဗ္ဗိဝ, မာဃဒေဝ were written သိဗ္ဗိုဝ်း, မဗ္ဗဇိုဝ်း with ဝ် was no longer employed as a Myanmar devowelizer it was also abandoned in Pali derived words.)

48. Previously, ယ် too was counted in addition to the 27 devowelizers as a Pali derived devowelizer. မိုး was written in lithic and ink inscriptions as မိုဝ်. But about the 19th century when the notion took hold that မိုး was derived from ဓေယ it was written မိုယ်း. But from mid-20th century, on the evidence of lithic and ink inscriptions it was dropped.

Myanmar vowels

49. Basically, there are 12 vowels in Myanmar writing. They are အ,အာ,ဣ,ဤ,ဥ,ဦ,ဧ,အဲ,ဩ,ဩဝ်,အံ,အို. The variation အ,အာ,အိ,အီ,အု,အူ,အေ,အဲ,အော,အော်,အံ,အို can also be written. These 12 basic vowels can be extended with the employment of tone markers (-) and (-း) and also devowelizing consonants.

50. Such sequential extension of the 12 basic vowels results in 21 vowels listed in the original thinbongyi Kramasa order depicted below

- အ အာ အား
- အိ အီ အီး
- အု အူ အူး

အေ အော့ အေး

အဲ အဲ့ အဲး

အော အော့ အော်

အံ အံ့ အံး

51. If the two tone markers (-) and (-:) are subtracted from the above 21 vowels, there remain the original 11 အ,အာ,အိ,အီ,အု,အူ,အေ,အဲ,အော,အော်,အံ့ . When အို is added the result is the basic 12 vowels in the Myanmar language.

52. In arranging the 21 vowels in the thinbongyi, only those have been selected which do not have devowelizers. Hence, အိုင် is not included in the sequence. Later ဝ် was dropped and အို was written extensively. Thus အို which was not in the original list came to be included

53. There are various views in inspect of vowels as there are in respect of consonants. The early Kaccayana Pali grammer showed eight vowels: အ,အာ,ဣ,ဤ,ဥ,ဦ,ဧ,ဩ. Monggallana showed ten vowels အ,အာ,ဣ,ဤ,ဥ,ဦ,ဧ,ဩ,ဧတ်,ဩတ်. The Konbaung period သဒ္ဒဗျူဟာကျမ်း by တောင်တွင်းဆရာတော်ခင်ကြီးဖျော် added three အဲ,အိုင်,အို to the original အ,အာ,ဣ,ဤ,ဥ,ဦ,ဧ,ဩ to make eleven. အံ is not found in these enumerations. Early scholars did not consider အံ to be a basic vowel. Since the superscripted dot (°) is listed as a consonant, the combination with အ to make အံ is not listed as a vowel. Myanmar thinbongyi does not included အံ in the consonant list. When vowels with no devowelizers are listed sequentially, အံ which has no obvious devowelizer came to be included in the vowel sequence. Thus အံ came to be shown as a vowel.

54. In early Myanmar writing of the Bagan period အဲ,အော်,အို out of the above 12 vowels were not yet found. During that period ဝ် was used instead of ဘ် [eg. ဝ်ယံကြီး, ဝ်ယံလွမ်း (ပဲကြီး,ပဲလွမ်း)], ဝ် instead of အော် [eg. တဝ်,ပုဇော် (တော်,ပူဇော်)], ဝ်, ဝ်, ဝ်, ဝ် instead of ဝ် [eg. ထိဝ်, ထုဝ်, ထိဝ်, ထိုဝ် (ထို)]. since ဝ် , ဝ် were used in such words as ဝ်ယံ, ထိုဝ် they were not regarded to be vowels.

55. These vowel ဧ was found in ဗေသာခမာသ in the lithic inscription of Shwegugyi inscribed in Pali in 493 M.E(1131 A.D.) The vowel အဲ was found in လဲကိုဝ်ဖျက်ဆီသဿ in the ငန္ဒယ်သင် lithic inscription in 509 M.E (1147A.D.). ဧ is in the Sanskrit form while အဲ is an adapted Myanmar form. The အဲ vowel is not found in Pali. On the strength of ဧ from it was included as a vowel in လိပိဒိပိကာကျမ်း by ယောအတွင်းဝန် and သင်ပုန်းကြီးသံခိပ် by လယ်တီဆရာတော်. However, the Sayadaw who wrote ဝေါဟာရတ္ထပကာသနီကျမ်း preferred the Myanmar form အဲ. This အဲ was also displayed in သဒ္ဒဗျူဟာကျမ်း by ခင်ကြီးဖျော် . The ဝေါဟာရတ္ထပကာသနီကျမ်း said that ဝဲ was not a form of writing found in Myanmar. အဲ became a Myanmar vowel from about 500 M.E (1138 A.D.).

56. The vowel အော် is not found in Pali and Sanskrit. It is a Myanmar vowel. It was written - ဝ် in the early 12th century of the Bagan period [eg. ပုထိုဝ်တဝ်(ပုထိုးတော်), လှဝ်ကာ(လှော်ကာ), ခဝ်(ခေါ်)]. In later 12th century, the အော် vowel began to be written in the ဝ် symbol instead ဝ် of [eg. စာတီဝ်(စေတီတော်), ရဇ္ဇေဝ်(ရချေသော်) , အဟိန်အဝ် (အရှိန်အစော်)]. Thereby, it became a basic vowel. အော် was written either with ဝ် or ဝ် as desired, but by the 13th century is also came to be written with ဝ်; Out of the three forms -ဝ်, ဝ် , ဝ်, the first form -ဝ် came to be rarely written by the 14th century. By the 18th century ဝ် came to be confused with the devowelizer symbol and so was little used. From that time ဝ် came to be written extensively.

57. It was shown in para 54 above that အို was not listed as a vowel because it included the form ဝ်. Though အို could be found without ဝ် in a few Bagan period inscriptions it was not standard. အိုင် was used from the Bagan period to about 1150 M.E. (1738 A.D) in the Konbaung period. အို without ဝ် came to be seen in writing from about 100 M.E (1638 A.D). From about 1150 M.E ဝ် was popularly used. It continued to be used in the palace. However, in the

Mandalay Yadanabon period အိုင် was rarely seen.

58. Thus, the list of Myanmar vowels was augmented from the original nine အ,အာ,အိ,အီ,ဥ,ဦ,အေ,အော,အံ to twelve by the addition first of အဲ then အော် then finally အို.

59. Myanmar writing had its source in the Brāhmī script. How the consonants and vowels င appropriate to the Myanmar language became consolidated can be seen in the photographic table which compares the various scripts.